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THE BOOKMAN

WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS

BY JOHN ERSKINE

WE may say of Howells more truly than of most writers who recently have left us, that it is too early to estimate his permanent fame. The spontaneous admiration for the man which has found utterance in the days following his death, made clear that he has a secure place in our history, if the judgment of the ablest can be trusted; but just what that place will be, this wave of admiration does not indicate. His interests were wide and his abilities many; he wrote many books and in many kinds; he was the spokesman among us for European realism, or at least for an American form of it, yet he was rich in the gentle idealism which suggests kinship with Longfellow and the Cambridge circle; he was open to new ideas and strange appeals, so that the record of his sympathies would make him appear the most broad-minded and cosmopolitan of our writers, everywhere at home in the world, and strictly contemporary with each hour of his life; yet there was an exquisiteness in his nature, a reserve of which he was aware, which in the end rendered his allegiances, personal and other, highly selective.

These complexities and cross-currents in his sympathies and therefore in his work, make it difficult to guess at once how his accomplishment will be remembered fifty years hence. It may be, however, that these very complexities will form the basis of his fame. In his unremitting zeal to give a true account of experience, and first of all to understand with sympathy the stream of experience he desired to portray, he gave himself up to the divergent and often unreconciled hopes, prejudices, and habits which from decade to decade distinguished the American world of his lifetime. Even if his books had no more permanent claim for their own sake, he might well be remembered, along with Henry Adams, as a fine nature conspicuously agitated by the boiling of the melting pot. But Howells gave himself wholeheartedly to American experience, as Adams did not, and the agitations it produced in him emerged in the form of paradoxes,

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but entirely happy ones. He became in his total work, as he wished to be in each of his novels, a faithful mirror of his time and place. He once recorded with approval a Spanish comment on French realism as illustrated by Flaubert, that there was in such realism, as there was in French life of that moment, something antipathetic and gloomy and limited. But, he added, "This seems to me exactly the best possible reason for its being. The expression of French life will change when French life changes." He would agree with us now that whatever there is in his work of shifting, or of contrast, or of contradictions, will in the end be altogether creditable, since he was the loving and sincere chronicler of a social scene which, as we all know, was during his time made up of shiftings and contrasts and contradictions.

The impression of complexity which he gives might be variously illustrated by each of his readers. The present writer felt it twenty-one years ago, when with other students of literature at Columbia College he heard Howells speak informally on "Novel Writing and Novel Reading". Professor Woodberry, then exercising his great influence as a teacher of poetry, had asked the lecturer to give us just such an exposition of realism as we were least likely to hear in his own classroom, and Howells answered the call with zest. So thoroughly did he flay any kind of writing which did not find its true romance in daily life, that there seemed for the moment no room in his philosophy for Homer or Shakespeare, certainly none for Shelley, and no room, or very little, for Walter Scott or Dickens or Cooper—what was worse, no room for folk-lore, nor for those most poetic of all truths that make up the literary world of childhood. He had already put the severe doctrine in his fine essay on "Criticism and Fiction". "In criticism it is his (the realist's) business to break the images of false gods and misshapen heroes, to take away the poor silly toys that many grown up people would still like to play with. He cannot keep terms with Jack the Giant-Killer or Puss in Boots, under any name or in any place." Those sentences, or their equivalent in his talk, sounded to our ears an unlovely omen. But what of the hard verdict on Scott, and the principle of criticism which it implied—"he was a great man, and a very great novelist as compared with the novelists who went before him. He can still amuse young people, but they ought to be instructed how false and how mistaken he often is, with his mediæval ideals, his blind Jacobitism, his intense devotion to aristocracy and royalty; his acquiescence in the division of men into noble and ignoble, patrician and plebeian, sovereign and subject, as if it were the law of God; for all which, indeed, he is not to blame as he would be if he were one of our contemporaries." In this condemnation and the forgiving final clause we detected some confusion of principle, but we did not consider it closely; we were too overwhelmed at sight of the honored craftsman disposing of our masters in such broad sweeps. I confess that Howells's strong plea for realism that evening cast a sombre eclipse upon his genius, so far as my youthful suffrage was concerned; for years I never heard or saw his name without feeling the fear of detection in some unrealistic joy of life—until one hour of immense relief, when I came on that page in "My Literary Passions" where he confesses that "on a lower plane" he liked the absolutely unreal, the purely fanciful, in all the arts, as well as the real. So we might feel

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free, after all, to enjoy the society of Richard the Lion Hearted, without qualms as to the mediævalism in the midst of which he flourished; and we might still amuse the children with the adventures of Jack the Giant-Killer, yet omit the annotation that the beanstalk was but flimsy stage property! It restored us to still better terms with Howells to discover in his delightful "Literary Friends and Acquaintances", that he had once considered himself primarily a poet. The discovery gave us hope that the spokesman for realism had not quite meant what he said, or if he did mean it, that sometimes he had meant the opposite too. We returned to "Criticism and Fiction" and found the qualification we had overlooked—"This is what I say in my severer moods, but at other times I know that, of course, no one is going to hold all fiction to such strict account." And even if he did continue, "There is a great deal of it which may be very well left to amuse us, if it can, when we are sick or when we are silly," yet a little further on he said right out, "Of the finer kinds of romance, as distinguished from the novel, I would even encourage the writing". If more proof were needed that his sympathies in literature were wider than the doctrines he pronounced, we should need only to observe, in "My Literary Passions", that his favorite authors were of all kinds, and of all countries, Italian, Russian, French, Norwegian, German, Spanish; and though at one moment one author or one book was his chief admiration, his verdict would have been given otherwise at another time. He was poet and novelist, realist and theorist, all at once, and we shall learn to appreciate him and his work only as a whole, even though a more piecemeal kind of study would embarrass us with fewer contradictions.

Realism is a hypothesis about life, but a hypothesis imported to the United States, not evolved from a study of the people here. Howells gave his allegiance to it, and phrased his principles as happily as we shall ever hope to hear them, but when he applied them to the portrayal of American life, he found an unusually stubborn resistance in his material. "Let fiction cease to lie about life; let it portray men and women as they are." What program could be nobler? But it is not a sufficient definition of realism to say that it portrays life as it is; Scott portrayed his mediæval world as it was,—at least, as nearly to the life as any historian can come,—with all its emotional bias, its spiritual eccentricities, its wide differences from our ways. But the realist has a moral purpose, over and above the faithfulness of portraiture; he wishes to elevate the conception of truth which his most realistic readers have. The romanticist, as Howells conceived of him, shakes off the encumbrance of fact in order to picture the world as he desires it to be; the realist invites us to study the facts in order to arrive at the dream of a better world than we now desire. It is perhaps inevitable that realism, unless it is rescued from itself, should always carry with it the chilling effect of a discipline contrived for our good. It hurts at first, like other kinds of spectacles intended to readjust our eyesight. As a method of seeing life, it operates best on those forms of experience which are sickly or distorted or in some sense unhappy; in other words, if the realist teaches us to see two miseries where we had observed only one before, we feel the wholesomeness of his instruction, however depressing—at least it is well to

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see things as they are. But if the realist must portray a society essentially happy, incorrigibly optimistic, and as devoted to day-dreams as Jack the Giant-Killer himself, there are but two courses open to him; either he will paint into his picture some shadows which ought to be there but are not—in which case he will have failed to render in their natural state the essential happiness and the incorrigible optimism; or else he will portray the mad romantic scene as it is, and be in effect undistinguishable from the romanticist.

Now the American world upon which Howells brought to bear the realistic hypothesis had large portions of the romantic temperament in it, as well as many roughnesses such as often appear under high lights in the canvas of realism. All art selects—that is, omits—something, no matter how emphatically the artist promises to write down men and women as they are. The romanticist omits from his memory of life the rough facts he does not like; if pressed for a reason he will say they are insignificant. The realist omits the romanticist. Once in a great while appears an artist of the first order, who is neither romanticist nor realist but simply clear-sighted. Such, we begin to see, was Mark Twain in his "Tom Sawyer" and "Huckleberry Finn", satisfying all the hopes of realism, but including for our eternal delight the sentiment, the audacity, that particular "otherworld" of miscellaneous superstitions and loyalties which compose the American mind. Writing of the same country at much the same time, Howells was perhaps handicapped by greater premeditation in his art, and by a certain hesitation after all to accept his subject as it was. Sensitiveness of temperament prompted him to avoid the rough details of American life, and his theory of realism caused him to look for the unromantic type, or to see the romantic type somewhat tragically. Silas Lapham and his household, Squire Gaylord and his daughter, or any other group from the best known novels, illustrate the extent to which Howells selected special features from the whole portrait of his country. He omitted, for one thing, that most American sort of temperament of which he was among the most lovable examples. How often does one find in his novels a gift for living, an urbanity and a happy success of spirit in any degree kindred to his own? Knowing the range of types in every section of the country, and observing so often the angular or deeply charactered physiognomies that engage his art, one is reminded of the atelier students who when choosing the models reject the comfortable and accept the thin, that there may be lines enough to draw.

But if he omitted from his novels his own rich and—shall we say it—romantic temperament, he was too inventive a genius not to find another medium for it, untrammeled by theory. If we read his works for a complete picture of America in his time, we must read the complements of the novels, those incomparable reminiscences of his literary friends, of his Italian and English days, of his rambles and studies in books; and we must read as part and parcel of these idealizations of life, the immortal "Boy's Town". In these and his other volumes of essays and sketches, he completes the truth he set out to tell of American men and women in his time and all in a beauty of word and cadence not to be matched now by any living among us. "Let fiction speak the language, the dialect, that most

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Americans know," he once wrote. Whether in his fiction or in his other work, he spoke a language which too few of his fellow men will ever use, though as he used it, they found it easy to understand.

HENRY JAMES AND THE THEATRE

BY BRANDER MATTHEWS

THE recent publication of Henry James's Letters, selected and edited with delicate discrimination by Percy Lubbock, must have drawn the attention of many readers to the interesting fact that James took an interest in the drama as an art second only to his interest in the novel. It has also informed these readers as to his long-nursed ambition to make money by writing plays,—an ambition always frustrated by malign fate. Probably only a few of those who first became aware of his dramatic aspirations by the disclosure in this correspondence will recall the evidence in his published works which testifies to his always apt appreciation of the art of acting and his ever persistent inquisitiveness as to the principles of playmaking. He came forward as a dramatic critic more often than is generally known; and his dramatic criticism is more intelligent—that is to say, it shows a better understanding of the theatre—than we had a right to expect from one who gave himself up to another art, that of prose fiction, so closely akin to the art of the drama and yet so widely divergent from it.

So many were Henry James's excursions into dramatic criticism that there are enough of them to fill a volume; and perhaps the task of making the collection will yet be undertaken by one of his staunch admirers. The book will be more welcome since James rescued only a few of them from magazines for which they were originally written. It may be well to list here the major part of the contents of this future gathering, certain to have a cordial reception from all students of the stage. In 1874 Henry James anonymously contributed to "The Atlantic" a discriminating, but somewhat chilly consideration of the revival of "The School for Scandal" by the competent company of comedians who were then making brilliant the stage of the Boston Museum. In 1875 he gave to "The Galaxy" an illuminating review of Tennyson's "Queen Mary", effectively contrasting it with Victor Hugo's more melodramatic treatment of the same enigmatic heroine in "Marie Tudor". In 1875 again he included in his "Transatlantic Sketches" an earlier letter on "The Parisian Stage". In 1876 he wrote, again for "The Galaxy", his enthusiastic appreciation of the actors and actresses of the Comédie Française, which he reprinted in 1878 in his volume of essays on the "French Poets and Novelists". In these early days he prepared for one periodical or another articles on Ristori and Salvini,

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on Henry Irving as Macbeth and on Macready's Diary—all duly catalogued in the exhaustive bibliography of Mr. Phillips.

For "The Galaxy" again in 1877 he wrote a review of "The London Stage", and in 1887 he contributed to "The Century" his glowing tribute to that most consummate comedian, Coquelin. He seems to have overlooked both of these papers when he was selecting material for his successive volumes of essays in criticism; and it is not easy to understand why it was that he forgot the study of Coquelin. It is one of the most luminous of theatrical portraits, worthy to hang beside the best of the histrionic evocations of Colley Cibber and Charles Lamb. He was never more cordially enthusiastic about any artist than he was about the incomparable Coquelin, the most gifted and the most versatile comic actor of the last three decades of the nineteenth century. I recall that when I drew Coquelin's attention to this superb testimony to his talent, the actor smiled with pleasure. "Henry James", he said; "yes, it appears that I have the privilege of throwing him into an ecstasy!" In 1915 Henry James was kind enough to revise this essay, so that it might serve as an introduction to Coquelin's own analysis of "Art and the Actor" when that was reprinted in the second series of the publications of the Dramatic Museum of Columbia University.

It remains to be recorded only that Henry James included among his "Essays in London and Elsewhere" two papers on Ibsen's plays, originally written in 1891 and 1893: and that in his "Notes on Novelists" he preserved a paper on Alexandre Dumas fils, written in 1895. Quite probably there may be other articles on theatrical themes contributed to one or another of the newspapers for which he served now and again as correspondent from Paris or from London. And not to be omitted from this record is the long story called "The Tragic Muse", one of the most veracious of theatrical novels; it was published in 1890.

From one or another of his dramatic criticisms I could borrow not a few pregnant passages, revelations of his penetrating insight into the inexorable conditions under which the playwright must do his work. Here is an early remark, culled from a letter on the Parisian stage, written in 1872: "An acted play is a novel, intensified; it realizes what the novel suggests, and by paying a liberal tribute to the senses, anticipates your possible complaint that your entertainment is of the meagre sort styled intellectual". This does not pierce to the marrow of the matter; it does not detail all the difference between the acted play and the novel; but it has its significance, none the less. In the same letter Henry James ventures to speak of the "colossal flimsiness" of "La Dame aux Camélias". Now Dumas's pathetic play may be more or less false, but it is not flimsy; it must have had a validity of its own, and even a certain sincerity of a kind, for it to have kept the stage for threescore years and ten.

Here, however, is a long paragraph from the paper on Tennyson's "Queen Mary" (written in 1875), which discloses an indisputable insight into the difficulties of the dramatist's art:

> The fine thing in a real drama, generally speaking, is that, more than any other work of literary art, it needs a masterly structure. It needs to be shaped and fashioned and laid together, and this process makes a demand upon an artist's rarest gifts. He must combine and arrange, interpolate and eliminate, play the joiner with the most attentive skill; and yet at the end effectually bury his tools and his sawdust, and invest his elaborate skeleton with the smoothest and most polished integument. The five-act drama—serious or hu-

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morous, poetic or prosaic—is like a box of fixed dimensions and inelastic material, into which a mass of precious things are to be packed away. The precious things in question seem out of all proportion to the compass of the receptacle; but the artist has an assurance that with patience and skill a place may be made for each, and that nothing need be clipped or crumpled, squeezed or damaged. The false dramatist either knocks out the sides of his box or plays the deuce with the contents; the real one gets down on his knees, disposes of his goods tentatively, this, that, and the other way, loses his temper but keeps his ideal, and at last rises in triumph, having packed his coffer in the one way that is mathematically right. It closes perfectly, and the lock turns with a click; between one object and another you cannot insert the point of a penknife.

It will be enough to risk only one more quotation,—this time from the paper evoked by the first performance of Ibsen's "Hedda Gabler" in London in 1891:

The stage is to the prose drama (and Ibsen's later manner is the very prose of prose) what the tune is to the song or the concrete case to the general law. It immediately becomes apparent that he needs the test to show his strength and the frame to show his picture. An extraordinary process of vivification takes place; the conditions seem essentially enlarged. Those of the stage in general strike us for the most part as small enough, so that the game played in them is often not more inspiring than a successful sack-race. But Ibsen reminds us that if they did not in themselves confer life they can at least receive it when the infusion is artfully administered. Yet how much of it they were doomed to receive from "Hedda Gabler" was not to be divined till we had seen "Hedda Gabler" in the frame. The play, on perusal, left us comparatively muddled and mystified, fascinated but—in one's intellectual sympathy—snubbed. Acted, it leads that sympathy over the straightest of roads with all the exhilaration of a superior pace.

Nothing could be better than that, nothing could make clearer the immitigable fact that the full measure of the essential power of any drama can be gauged only in the actual theatre, to the special conditions of which it has been scientifically adjusted.

II

In default as yet of a circumstantial biography which shall set before us the successive but perpetually unsuccesssful efforts which Henry James made to establish himself as a dramatist, we must find what materials we may in his letters, and in the explanatory prefaces which Mr. Lubbock has prefixed to the several chronological sections into which he has chosen to distribute the correspondence. First and last Henry James seems to have composed eight plays, three of which underwent the ordeal by fire before the footlights.

His earliest attempt was an amplification of "Daisy Miller", a short story which had attained an immediate vogue. This dramatization was made in 1882 on commission from the managers of the Madison Square Theatre in New York. But it was not found acceptable to them, and the author took it over to London and read it to the managers of the St. James's Theatre without winning a more favorable opinion. Unable to arrange for performance, he resigned himself to publication; and the book of the play appeared in 1883.

Half-a-dozen years later he became discouraged at his inability to maintain the popularity which he had tasted earlier in his career as a novelist; and he persuaded himself that he might win a wider audience as a writer of plays than as a writer of novels. He asserted more than once that he was persuaded to playmaking by the patent fact that it was more immediately remunerative than story-telling; but this assertion seems to be the result of a certain self-deception, as his letters prove that he was convinced of his richer endowment for the drama than for prose-fiction. "The strange thing is", so he wrote to his brother in 1891, "that I have always known this (the drama) was my more characteristic form.... As

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for the form itself its honor and inspiration are its difficulty. If it were easy to write a good play I couldn't and wouldn't think of it; but it is in fact damnably hard." A little later, in a letter to Stevenson, he said he was finding that the dramatic form opened out before him "as if there were a kingdom to conquer.... I feel as if I had at last found my form—my real one—that for which pale fiction is an ineffectual substitute".

When he turned to the theatre he was not exploring an unknown country. He had been a constant playgoer, ever inquisitive about all manifestations of the twin arts of the stage, the histrionic and the dramaturgic. Whenever he was in Paris he sat night after night absorbing the best that the Comédie Française could give him; and Sunday he profited by the sane solidity of the dramatic criticisms of Francisque Sarcey from whom few of the secrets of the art of the player were hidden. As early as 1878 he had written to his brother: "My inspection of the French theatre will fructify. I have thoroughly mastered Dumas, Augier and Sardou; and I know all they know and a great deal more besides". And in another letter also to his brother, in 1895, he dwelt on the double difficulty of the novelist who turns dramatist, the question of method and the question of subject. "If he is really in earnest, as I have been, he surmounts the former difficulty before he surmounts the latter. I have worked like a horse—far harder than anyone will ever know—over the whole stiff mystery of technique—I have run it to earth, and I don't in the least hesitate to say that, for the comparatively poor and meagre, the piteously simplified, purposes of the English stage, I have made it absolutely my own, put it in my pocket."

That this was not empty vaunting, and that his keen and cool critical insight had led him to grasp the chief of the essential qualities of the drama, as distinguished from prose-fiction, is proved by a passage in a letter written in 1909 to a friend who had sent him a published piece of hers, which seemed to him undramatic in that it lacked "an action, a progression", whereby it was deprived of the needful tenseness. "A play appears to me of necessity to involve a struggle—a question of whether and how, will it or won't it happen? and if so, or not so, how and why?—which we have the suspense, the curiosity, the anxiety, the *tension*, in a word, of seeing; and which means that the whole thing shows an attack upon *oppositions*—with the victory or the failure on one side or the other, and each wavering and shifting from point to point." Here Henry James is at one with Ferdinand Brunetière, when the French critic laid down what he called the Law of the Drama,—that if a play is to arouse and retain the interest of the audience it must present a struggle, a clash of contending volitions; it must exhibit the stark assertion of the human will.

Henry James's second play was, like his first, a dramatization of one of his own stories, a stage version of "The American". It was more fortunate than the stage version of "Daisy Miller", in that it did thrust itself into the theatre, where it lived only a brief life. It was produced in 1891, by Edward Compton in England, at first in the provinces and then for a few performances in London. When he commenced playwrighting Henry James did not appreciate that it is a more difficult task to dramatize a novel than

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to compose an original play, because the author is necessarily unable to deal with his material as freely as he could if it were still molten and had not already been run into the mold of a narrative. Seemingly he made this discovery in due course; and he did not again attempt to turn any of his stories into plays.

His third effort was an original piece, "Guy Domville", brought out by George Alexander at the St. James's Theatre in 1895. That it failed to be favorably received and that it had to be withdrawn at the end of a month, was a grievous disappointment to the author,—a disappointment made more poignant by the gross discourtesy, not to call it wanton brutality, with which he was received by a portion of the audience when he was called before the curtain at the end of the first performance. It was perhaps due to this indignity that he did not publish the play which had failed on the stage in the natural expectation that it might please in the study, appealing from the noisy verdict of its spectators to the quieter judgment of its possible readers.

He had already, the year before, printed in two volumes, entitled "Theatricals", four other comedies which he had vainly proffered to the managers, — "Tenants", "Disengaged", "The Album", and "The Reprobate". One other play he turned into a tale, called "Covering End", published in 1898. Here he was not contending with any insuperable difficulty in transposition, since the novel may very well be dramatic whereas the play shrinks in abhorrence from any tincture of the epic. The drama never lost its attraction for Henry James, but he was repelled, as well as repulsed, by the theatre, wherein it has its domicile. "The whole odiousness of the thing lies in the connection between the drama and the theatre", so he wrote to his brother in 1893; "the one is admirable in its interest and its difficulty, the other loathsome in its conditions. If the drama could only be theoretically or hypothetically acted, the fascination resident in its all but unconquerable form would be unimpaired, and one would be able to have the exquisite exercise without the horrid sacrifice." This was a suggestion natural enough in a retiring and fastidious artist in letters, but inconceivable in the mouth of any born playwright, Shakespeare or Molière, Sheridan or Beaumarchais, in whom the pain was physicked by the labor they delighted in.

Notwithstanding his distaste for any other than a theoretic or hypothetic playhouse, Henry James in 1908, ten years after the publication of "Covering End", did not hesitate to disinter the one-act play upon which it had been founded and to authorize its performance. He even permitted it to be cut into three acts,—just as Scribe fourscore years earlier had made a three-act comedy, "Valérie", out of the one-act comédie-vaudeville by the simple expedient of excising the songs and of dropping the curtain twice during the course of the action. The new-old three-act piece was entitled "The High Bid"; it was performed a few times in the provinces and a few times more in London by Mr. and Mrs. Forbes-Robertson. But it did not make any definite impression on the playgoing public. It was not a disheartening failure like "Guy Domville", yet it could not be called a success. Still its milder reception encouraged its author to resume work on two more plays, "The Other House" and "The Outcry". There were even negotiations for the production of

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these pieces,—negotiations which came to nothing, chiefly because prolonged illness forced him to give up work on them.

III

In the deprecatory note which he prefixed to the second volume of "Theatricals", Henry James declared that "the man who pretends to the drama has more to learn, in fine, than any other pretender; and his dog's eared grammar comes at last to have the remarkable peculiarity of seeming a revelation he himself shall have made". Plainly enough he had the conviction that to him the revelation was complete and that he had his self-made grammar by heart. Why then did he fail after efforts so persistent and so strenuous? Why did disaster follow fast and follow faster? It was plainly not from any lapse in painstaking or any easy ignoring of the difficulties of the dangerous task. It was not because his primary motive was pecuniary, since he was soon seized with ardor in his adventures into a new art. What then was it?

I think that we can find a key to the secret in his letters, wherein he more than once exhibits his detestation of the audience he was aiming to amuse. He wrote to his brother in 1895, "... the thing fills me with horror for the abysmal vulgarity of the theatre and its regular public, which God knows I have had intensely, even when working (from motives as pure as pecuniary motives can be) against it". What right had any man to hope that he might gain the suffrages of spectators he so totally detested and despised? Henry James here takes an attitude, he discloses a frame of mind, as dissimilar as may be from the mighty masters of the drama,—from Corneille's or Molière's, for example.

In 1911 he wrote to a friend that "the conditions—the theatre-question generally in this country (England) are horrific and unspeakable. Utter, and as far as I can see, irreclaimable barbarism reigns. The anomalous fact is that the theatre, so called, can flourish in barbarism, but that any drama worth speaking of can develop but in the air of civilization". That assertion implies a belief that England was less civilized in the opening years of the twentieth century than it had been in the opening years of the seventeenth. Many things may be said against the present age, but not that it is less civilized than that of James I.

We may dismiss these two opinions as the petulancies of a man of delicate sensibilities abraded to exacerbation by gross contacts with the vulgar herd. None the less are contacts with the herd inherent in the playwright's trade. He cannot retire into any ivory tower; he must come down to the market place; only at his peril can he shrink from meeting his fellow man. He is disqualified for the drama which appeals, has always appealed, and always will appeal, to the mass, to the common people (if the term is insisted upon), if he holds himself aloof, if his sympathy is not sufficient to make him for the moment one of the throng, to feel as the mass feels, even if he feels more acutely, to think as the plain people think, even if he thinks more wisely. At bottom the drama must be fundamentally democratic, since it depends upon the majority.

The great dramatists did not succeed by writing down to the mob, but by writing broad to humanity. They did not have to deliberate and to quest about for the things to which the many-headed public would respond; they knew, for they themselves thrilled with the same passions, the same de-

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sires, and the same ideals. They had a perfect solidarity with their fellow citizens, whom they faced on the plane of equality and whom they did not look down on from any altitude of conscious superiority. They never condescended; they were never even tempted to condescension. They gave to the throng, made up of all manner of men, literate and illiterate, the best they had in them, the very best. Nor did they feel that in so doing they were making any sacrifice. They were stout of heart and strong of stomach, with no drooping tendrils of exquisite sensibility recoiling from gross contacts.

Perhaps it would be unfair to suggest that when he was engaged in playwrighting Henry James was unconsciously condescending; but it is not unfair to assert that he had no solidarity with the spectators he was hoping to attract and delight. What he gave them—the note prefixed to "Theatricals" proves it amply—was as good as he thought they deserved or could understand; it was not his best. And even if he had designed to give them his best, he could not have done it, because a miniaturist cannot make himself over into a scene-painter; the two arts may demand an equal ability but the hand that works in either, soon subdued to what it works in, is incapacitated for the other. The supersubtleties in which Henry James excelled were impossible in the theatre; they demand time to be taken in, an allowance impossible to the swiftness of the stage; they would not get across the footlights; and they might puzzle even the most enlightened spectators. It takes an immense experience and a marvelous skill "to paint in broad strokes, but so artfully that at a distance it appears as if we had painted in miniature",—which, so the Spanish dramatist Benavente tells us, "is at once the problem and the art of the drama".

In his review of "The School for Scandal", Henry James confessed that he saw "no reason to believe that the mass of mankind will ever be more artistic than is strikingly convenient, and suspect that acute pleasure or pain, on this line, will remain the privilege of an initiated minority". The supreme leaders of the drama, Sophocles, Shakespeare, and Molière, were satisfied to rely on the "mass of mankind" of whose sympathies they had an intuitive understanding. Henry James, all unwittingly it may be, was addressing himself only to the "initiated minority". Where they possessed robust straightforwardness and direct brevity, he was solitary, isolated, delicately fastidious. He must have read but he did not take to heart Joubert's warning that we ought "in writing, to remember that men of culture are present, but it is not to them that we should speak". Henry James's novels would have been more widely enjoyed if he had profited by this precept; and because he did not profit by it his plays are "all silent and all damned".

Like the poet the playwright is born and not made; but like the poet again he has to be made after he is born,—that is to say, he has to master the mysteries of his trade, to become a competent craftsman, to acquire technique. Henry James may not have deceived himself when he declared that he had by hard labor learned how to employ the dramatic form; but the most consummate dexterity would avail him little if he had not also the native gift, often possessed in abundance by men of little intelligence and of less culture and often denied to men of commanding minds. After all, in any of the arts inspiration is more important than either aspiration or perspiration—or than both combined.

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OLD WESTS FOR NEW

BY HAROLD WALDO

THE three mysterious horsemen that darkened the hill accommodatingly just as evening fell and the wary reader took up his post, have faded far in English literature and given way to the paltry figure of Edwin Clayhanger swinging down Moorthorne Road. Thus the dark horseman of the Golden West is haply fading. And with him that ugly symbol of an inordinate era, the wideawake—or great slouch hat. Instinctively donned by bull-necked men, by men of blaring ego, such as seek to cut a dominating figure among their fellows, the Wild Bill hat is dwindling out of the West. Its empire is shrunk to three pinchbeck principalities: the movie plant, Missouri, and Washington, D. C. The Stetson school of fiction and the Stetson school of "statesmanship" show equally deflated, and their puncturing may well be charged along with other items to the new woman and the rising city—with its vast insignia of urban taste—built for her.

The old West was a man's country. There he contrived a Gargantuan society celebrated by Mark Twain and Bret Harte, a cosmos of laughable, outrageous figures, a preposterous epos that astonished and delighted... a faraway world. At close range, however, it had the same gross virtues and rank vices that flourish in back-country stable, barber shop and bar, with a Rabelaisian bouquet of flagrant virility.

But the feminine arrival has changed this—as the arrival of woman has everywhere altered the face of affairs. Subtle critic of manners and morals, she has increasingly curbed the manly cult of Mumbo-jumbo. From Jane Austen to Mary Watts she has poked sly fun at those Gargantuan exhibitions that have made man such an unlovely excrescence on the society he haunts. Under her appraising eye he has shrunken commendably. The unbridled whiskers and broad hat, the festooning watch chain and colossal "charm" of dangling elephant and locomotive are wrapt into regions of old unhappy far-off things and Prince Alberts long ago. Man is pulling in his horns, in short. And so is the West. The old West is gone. Romance is dead....

Then—long live Romance! The red-blood brand is obsolete. But the romance of selective realism, heralded by the Norrises and Willa Sibert Cather, is facing a glittering prospect, such as do the tall windows of the great Five Towns of the West—Oakland, Alameda, Berkeley, Richmond, and San Francisco, close linked on San Francisco Bay.

There where the old Peralta Rancho spread on Contra Costa hills, near Johnny Heinbold's saloon and the

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drab, dead haunts of London, are ranged the great shipyards that only yesterday hung out fabricating records to defy the fiercest efforts of Delaware and Fall River. While Oakland sends down her clanging hulls upon the Estuary, Alameda launches the fluttering bright caps of girl swimmers who pit their stripling strength against the mermaids of the Antipodes. Here Fanny Durack of Australia ploughs a snowy quick-water in the wake of the newspaper boat, and Duke Kahanamoku illustrates the startling vigor of his dying South Seas race. At Richmond the fat oil of Kern County fields rolls in from the South. Down there in the country of Mary Austin's "The Ford" are the Four Towns of the oil industry, which trade their fuming wealth for the fruit of Placer County's Four Towns: Auburn, Newcastle, Loomis, Penryn. The huge flumes that water the foothill orchards convey the "blue coal" of the mountain lakes through power houses that loom on piney spurs like castles along the Moselle. Here high tension energy is shot a hundred and fifty miles away to turn the wheels of San Francisco. The novel of today's West may well dispense with darkling horsemen and moonlight affrays when 736, the Mallet Compound, wheels out of Roseville round-house to boom up the long Sierra grade with its

> Mishni! gishni! stingal!
> Ya! Ya! Ya!

Here to cheer us—in a land where preposterous romance is dead—is a Kipling and Conradian nexus of high tension interests that must persist and intensify so long as Mallet "crabs" grind over the Sierras and great ships put out for China's thunderous dawns. With McAndrews of Telegraph Hill in the engine room and Vartek Parichek of Haight Street bucking a waiter in the dining-saloon, the richly varied consort of new San Francisco follows a modern argosy to the seat of ancient mornings and secret perfumes in the East.

This interplay of racial forces nowhere follows such free and heroic lines as in the friendly West. Touched vaguely though quaintly by Charles Caldwell Dobie in his stories of the San Francisco Czech quarter, it has not yet been discovered for us as Wilbur Daniel Steele has discovered the Portuguese life round Plymouth Rock. The Italian in his foothill orchard; the Azores Islander fishing the Sacramento for giant salmon; the Jugo-Slav in little orchard valleys that filter to the sea: these aspects of rare and fruitful color are scarcely explored.

Of a Sunday morning, when off his run, McAndrews saunters down the steep, bright streets to Golden Gate Park and takes a hand wi' the bowlin'—meeting on the open green with Bates of the Caledonian Trust and McLaren, the famous master of the park, who hails from Dunedin and the Stevenson country.

Meantime Vartek, the merry Czech boy of Haight Street hill, in his jaunty Sokol uniform and falcon-feathered cap is probably marching to the ferry with a parti-colored crowd of Slavic picnickers to spend the day at Shell Mound, near Oakland Across the Bay.

These picnics in the furtive, scrubby old park sparkle with a naive color, all too coarsely rendered by Jack London in his "Valley of the Moon". He missed the tart charm of pretty Croatian girls dancing in great gloomy pavilions, near dreary cypress trees drawn gaunt in a bright wind which clatters lonesomely along their dusty shore. Tenebrous blue gums guard the massy, mysterious shell mound

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through a week of desolation, awaiting a Sunday of pomp, when the courts of Carniola and Carinthia assemble in dustier desolation of paper-littered grounds to celebrate their bizarre folk-rites with chocolate soldiery and a paprika dash of music. One remembers particularly a little twelve-year-old Croatian girl who watched the dancing wistfully, knowing she could never hope to dance because of a shortened foot. Perhaps her spirit lingers there, haunting with something of the immemorial Slavic sadness the weary cypress trees, until next Sunday brings the jaunty cohorts of County Mayo or County Clare, and the brisk blue eye and pert white chin of Irish Aileen lightens the gloom of the melancholy old park. A pleasure ground, this, that would scarcely suit a genteel taste; but somehow, by grace and glamour of these birds of passage, a realm of romance all shabby forlorn.

Not far from here is the old Emeryville race-track which played a sinister part in Charles Tenney Jackson's magnificent story of "The Day of Souls"—a novel revealing the old San Francisco in all its rancid, evil, and enthralling beauty. No one has arisen since Jackson to present that city's cruel enchantment so brilliantly as he. Laboring in the old San Francisco "Bulletin" building, he forged the style that sends his sentences in silken wave lengths swishing. Ominous between the rollers' motion comes the deep intoning of the lighthouse bell on a note of insistent doom. Strange that just such a style, of just such sonorous Flaubertian force, was being forged in like setting across the continent's span by another young American newspaperman, Stephen French Whitman, working in the old New York "Sun" rookery. Between "The Day of Souls" and Whitman's magnificent "Predestined" is a striking and instructive kinship. From some similar setting of newspaper loft—perhaps from such a setting only—we may hope for other searching transcripts of life, blazing as do "The Day of Souls" and "Predestined" with the unique glow and uncanny phosphorescence of crawling city life itself.

Certain it is that Jack London's novels give us little of this radiance and color. A giant in the white North, he was but a half-god in the Five Towns. "Martin Eden" catches only a baldly conventional setting, as void of depth and color as a movie celluloid.

Poles apart from his flat, obvious treatment is the peep-show minutia of Kathleen Norris's interiors. Her lower-class homes are fairly fusty with the odor of domesticity; while her high-class folk actually distract us with their insignificant social calculations and steam-heated emotions. Such defects as these are, they are those of qualities; and again and again one yields to the casual and cluttered charm of her San Francisco.

No representative American short-story collection should be without her precious tale of Alanna, the little San Francisco Irish girl. So fresh and tender it is, so rarely humorous. If she had but compressed her novels to the same classic mold, there had been no trouble in placing her alongside Willa Sibert Cather. As it is, we must pay a wondering tribute to the small group of Norris et Cie, whose marches enclose a fair moiety of significant western fiction.

Even the level-eyed clarity of Miss Cather's vision has not pierced deeper than did Frank Norris's. From his splendid "station point" before the panorama of western life, he swept the elemental struggle of men for soil, food, and liberty. He told his tale

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with the vehement rush of a great veracious artist, who has seen largely and exultantly; and even so, he sketched in his humbler detail with a masterly hand.

Here it is, in the matter of detail, that Miss Cather eludes us. She yields us the piquant feature and very perfume of a fascinating alien life; yet now and again in "My Antonia" this fragrance sifts out into something chill and thin. A precious pastel vagueness swathes her prairies at times. Nor does she grasp the noble passion for liberty which gave Norris's "Octopus" a Promethean grandeur unmatched in American fiction. But she has brought within the scope of American novel writing a strange racial beauty produced with a flowing, classic line that overleaps all trifling genre painting in the goddess-like majesty of her Bohemian and Scandinavian maidens.

In token of their indigenous character and superb scope the works of Norris and Jackson and Cather loom up through modern western fiction as guide-posts to the future. But the half-gods die hard. The western imagination is custom-caked with a banal tradition of red-shirt romance. According to Mr. Chambers the West is too self-conscious to produce the great American novel. Not too conscious of itself, Mr. Chambers, but of a stereotyped and unveracious version of itself. Certain novelists pandered to the West's childish fancy for vainglorious splurge; and whatever chance the country had to free itself from the cattleman cliché and red-blood buncombe, was quashed in season by the baneful genius of the movie. Two-gun play and the rest of the pitiful paraphernalia is a cheap perversion of the real West. The West must slough off this incubus in order to realize its untold prospects.

For in the rolling-stock of sheer romance there has never been such daring expansion as we find here. Tall engines as in Norris's day still scour the long highways; but a Franco-American genius named Mallet has coupled two such engines into one—a long-barreled thing called the Mallet Compound, equal to three of the monster that crashed through Vanamee's huddled animals before Presley's horrified vision. Pistol-toting is no longer in vogue here—except in Culver City. But great ships still stand in from the Orient, and snappy, metallic looking yellow officers stand behind the weather dodgers awaiting pratique—with permission to discharge their loads of flaming silk. Anon this costly freight is loaded on the "silk train"—a solid cargo of well guarded treasure, and, with "rights through" that give it express train clearance, is snatched out of the salt water flats by a drumming Mallet, that carries it across the great interior valley, up through the foothills, thundering and drilling onward, through the black-bellied python of the coiling snow-sheds, on . . . toward our own far East.

The lives that go to the making and handling of that silk train are the stuff of vivid romance. Such romance is not vain and disingenuous. Yet a regard for what is most humanly germane carries us back of such overt values to the stress and posture of racial elements here commingling, to little Irish Alanna and Shell Mound Park. It is easy to fancy the old park as haunted by these colorful ghosts of dead holidays, and to picture Alanna's happy spirit finding out the wistful-eyed Croatian girl and setting her heart to dancing. And the beauty of the matter is that this is not an empty

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fancy, but a symbol of the very fact. For here the ends of the earth are meeting and mingling in such wide and generous amplitude of spirit as the world has never known, and in a country that has about it something of a vast pleasure ground. There is no doubt that out of these elements the West is building a finer, braver America, which shall not despise the shabby but indigenous romance of old Shell Mound Park.

WHEN I REMEMBER YOU

BY KEVIN LOGUE

WHEN I remember you there falls
A silence in my mind,
As after gusty intervals
Settles the weary wind,
And a far voice in the stillness calls,
Silver, and very kind.

Then I give over matching words
Against an old despair,
And I know the sky would fill with birds,
With song would fill the air,
If you could see the broken sherds
Of the life I yet must bear.

You did not shatter it, but I
Broke it into my hands;
Wherefore my sky is a silent sky
And all lands twilight lands:
Of pride that towered as heaven high
There is not one wall stands.

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MURRAY HILL ON HIS TRAVELS

INDIANAPOLIS, *May*, 1920.

YOU see, it is like this. And a tale, I promise you, you shall hear.

It was decided in the office of THE BOOKMAN that Murray Hill had lost his kick. By over much sitting at a desk had he grown old. He should go, like one Conrad, in quest of his youth. He should return again, for a space, to the life to which he was bred; be again (for a time), as of old, a delighted child alike of great streets and mean streets, a rover who goes where the wind follows after, a spirit with no abiding city. His art was not to be literature, but the supreme art of all —to look with entertainment (and with charity) upon the world, and to have frank speech with all manner of men. Such was the wisdom of THE BOOKMAN office; and greater wisdom have I seldom seen.

To begin, then, with a tribute to human honesty: I one time owned a very large kit-bag, a very costly kit-bag, and a very handsome one. The very thing would this have been to transport all that I would have need of in my wanderings. But, alas! on an evil day it was stolen, with many things of value to me which it contained. Now, to run after a trunk on wanderings—one might as well take along a wife. And it is one of the prime secrets of living (so that one may say when he comes to die: "Well, I've had an interesting life!") that one should never duplicate what he had before. If a man has owned an Airedale and lost him, he should get a Police dog, or a Bull; if a man has loved a blonde and she has divorced him, he should take to himself a brunette. So it was another kit-bag would never do.

What then? It hath been said, seek and ye shall find. As for me it is as told in that very fine poem of Hilaire Belloc, "The South Country":

> A lost thing could I never find,
> Nor a broken thing mend;
> And I fear I shall be all alone,
> When I come toward the end.

Seek I, and I find not. Trouble yourself nowhat about the matter; go jauntily on your way and the gods pursue you with their gifts in outstretched hand. Take Christmas presents; you know not what to give. Never mind, at the eleventh hour desperation will save you, and do you proud; a man is never so nimble in his mind as when he is desperate. Take words; you strain for the right word to turn a thought—and continually it eludes you. Cease your straining and go to shaving. Let your thoughts be like a rill of water, reflecting in reminiscence the sunlight and shadows of your life. Suddenly you pause, your razor poised before your nose. It has come to you! *The word!* However, I did not purpose to speak to you of philosophy. This is not a treatise, but a chronicle.

I put my mind at peace. I knew that at the time appointed I should be prepared. "For all things work to-

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gether for good to them that love God." And so (as ever) it was.

Was I not hurrying along Forty-second Street to get that cane (the one with the stag handle and gold band) which I had left to be repaired? And did not Fortune cause me to turn my head, inexplicably, ever so little to the left? And did I not see in a window that which the Force that created and operates the universe had determined æons and æons ago I should take with me as my carryall on my travels? I did.

It was a double-barreled suitcase with an accordian-like side capable of considerable projection outward. I went in and I said to the man there in charge: "May I look at that suitcase in your window?" "Certainly," he replied. I said—I never quibble about anything (friend, do not let Death find you stalled somewhere quibbling, but valiantly on your way)—I said: "I will take this suitcase, how much is it?"

"That suitcase, Sir," he said, "is worth seventy-five dollars." "Good!" I replied. "Have my name put on it at once, on both ends." For I am proud of my name (I should like to have had it on both sides of the suitcase as well); it is a high-sounding name. To me, it rings out like those gorgeous words of Mr. St. Ives:—"When I can't please a woman, hang me in my cravat!"

"As evidently you are not going to give this suitcase as a present", said the man, "I can make you a discount on it. It has been in the window", he said, "and you see Sir, it is a bit spotted by the sun. This discount would bring the price to sixty-five dollars." "Excellent!" I exclaimed; "most admirable, indeed!"

"Then", said the man, "I can make you a still further discount on that suitcase. Five dollars more can come off on account of—"

"Done!" I said, "whatever the reason—I won't let five dollars stand in the way of me and the suitcase."

It is a splendid suitcase. Many have admired it. And it is certainly worth as much as forty dollars.

* * * *

I leaped out of my cab at the station. Not many were assembled to see me off. I waved my hand at the populace as I boarded my train. I sped away. In my heart a lark was singing.

I dined with a gentleman whose name I did not catch. I talked in the smoker with five persons whom I had never before seen. I slept—and, as always with me on trains, it seemed to me in my dreams that throughout the night we rushed through a mighty storm. I breakfasted at seven, at a table together with three gentlemen who could not be drawn into conversation.

It was about half-past nine in the morning: I became decidedly restless. Also it began to seem to me that there was some sort of a bump in my side, directly below my lowest left rib. I altered my position. The bump was for a moment apparently taken by surprise; then it returned, more pronounced than before. I shifted my weight from side to side; walked about, again sat down. The bump expanded. My restlessness steadily increased—mounted to a feverish nervousness. My mind became centred upon the idea of how long it would be before we should reach Indianapolis and I could get off that train. Once off and into the air I felt that I should soon come around. Half an hour before the train reached the station I was in the vestibule waiting at the door.

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I succeeded in holding myself sufficiently in hand to get the suitcase checked. I had no immediate plan further than to escape into the open air. I started up Illinois Street. I felt that I could retain consciousness only a few moments longer—if so long. I saw a dairy-lunch, staggered in, sank upon a chair. Perhaps a little rest—maybe I should revive sufficiently to think out a plan. I got a passing waiter to bring me a cup of black coffee. My hand shook so the liquid splashed with burning heat upon my legs. I tried to attract the attention, one after another, of several men not far from me. One gave me a cold stare. Another nodded and smiled at me pleasantly, a third got up, apparently with considerable reluctance, and came slowly before me. As well as I could gasp it, I asked him if he would not get a doctor for me. He showed what seemed to me amazingly little concern for my situation. Indeed, he seemed to be more than a little annoyed at me for having got him in what he appeared to regard as a troublesome (and an embarrassing) position. After some hesitation, however, he did consent to stroll out the door. I don't know where he went, he was gone a very short while—I knew this even though every moment seemed to me half an hour. Upon his return he announced, in a manner which clearly indicated his decided relief at being so well out of such a nuisance of a matter, that "everyone seemed to be out". He hastily added that there was a drugstore across the street about half-way down the block where they could probably fix me up, and quickly made his getaway.

I grew no better sitting in that broad-arm chair. I arose and tried to steady myself on my cane. Again (and it was my only thought) it seemed that I *must* fight my way to the open air. When I found it, it embraced me like a cooling bath. Nevertheless, tighter than ever was clutched my heart and all my inner organs, and my legs and hands shook like leaves in the wind. A thought came to me: in the next block south, down the way I had come, was a first-rate hotel—I would try to get there. Could I make it? I didn't know. I retained consciousness now by sheer exercise of will. In another second, maybe, I would fall into darkness, and as for this world, it would be with me as my club, The Players, (quoting from Will) says on the obituary cards it pastes on its wall: "The rest is silence."

That hour which awaits us all I knew had come to me. Should I awake to continue the play upon another stage? Curious it is: this thought was hardly in my mind at all. I am afraid I shall seem a very irreverent man—and yet when, as I well knew, Death has been from me far, I have not been wholly without reverence: I have thought much and with awe of the Creator of all things. I have worshiped the beauty God has made on this planet; I have tried not to bear false witness; I have paid my debts (when I had, or could get, the money); and I have loved my neighbor, and have coveted not his wife. Whatever, however, I have been, I am here a conscientious artist weaving a veracious chronicle. I am sorry to have to say that in this awful hour I repented not a whit of my sins, which have been grievous and many.

Now there is a popular idea, an idea which has persisted for centuries, and which is practically universal, that when a man knowingly comes to die, with or without the support of religion, he is horribly afraid. Speak-

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ing for myself only (but I do not regard myself as braver than, if as brave as, most men), I have found this idea a fallacy. I have to say that in this dreadful hour, the feeling in my mind was not fear but anger.

I was angered that, at the very outset, my excursion, the food for growth which in my roving commission I should have reaped from further knowledge of the ways of men, was to be snatched from me; and in the back of my head was the strange thought: a deuce of a character they will think you, back at THE BOOKMAN office, to go and die on the first leg of your business journey. All this which I have told at length, of course, flashed through my mind in seconds. To the end I was quite resigned. My determination to die under a roof, I think it was that kept me up. My mind was gone, almost; and my knees smote one against the other; but I was nearly within reach of the entrance to the hotel.

Now there is a very beautiful cemetery in this city where I was born. In my boyhood it was one of the show places of the town. It is called Crown Hill. And there are gathered the bones of my fathers. I was further enraged. As I stumbled along I observed a string of street-cars passing. My impulse was to fire my stick through a window of one of them. They were, all of them, labeled "Crown Hill". This, I said to myself, is a devil of a way to say to one, Welcome Home!

* * * *

This hotel bears the beautiful name of an English river—though I believe it was named after an old family here.

In the lobby I sank into a chair with a tall back and upholstered in some rich stuff resembling a tapestry, and of a bell-boy nearby I demanded the house physician. It seemed to me a lifetime but it was probably only a few minutes, before the doctor arrived at my side. He was a large, portly man, with a hearty, corn-belt manner. I struggled to my feet, swayed and tottered, and the pressure on my innards was terrific. He said: "I can't examine you here, we must go upstairs. Have you a room?" I replied that I had not, but that I was most eager to obtain one. Then ensued a wrangle of several minutes between the clerk, the doctor, and myself. Owing to the violent shaking of my hands, I could no more register than I could have flown out of the door, risen in the air, without airplane or angel's wings, and circled round the very tall shaft of the "monument" which they have here—that is, the imposing monument erected to the memory of the Indiana Soldiers and Sailors of the Civil War, which stands at the heart of the city in the centre of the "circle", a ring-around affair which in London would be called a "circus", as Piccadilly Circus. The clerk was strongly averse to putting to bed in this hotel a man who was not, in the police term, on the blotter. Finally, I got him with an upper-cut: I told him, in weird gasps, that it would be better for the business interests of the house if I should die obscurely upstairs in bed than if I should die publicly here before the desk in the lobby. The doctor was permitted to register for me.

He half carried me up (my feet shuffled along the floor); I fell on the bed and he undressed me. I asked him (with an unconcern in his pronouncement which, looking back, now decidedly amazes me) if this seizure or whatever it was, was fatal. He replied, in a very kindly voice, that he "hoped not". He denied my declaration that there was within me a huge bump at the point of my lowest left

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rib. I asked him then if he would please explain to me why I *felt*, with severe intensity, a huge bump there; why my heart had gone on a jamboree; why I couldn't get my breath; was a spectacular wreck generally, and couldn't live more than a few moments longer.

He said that what I had was acute indigestion, gastritis, or something like that; that further, though such attacks occasionally proved fatal, he thought I had passed, or would soon pass, the crisis of mine. I was given drugs and ordered to stay in bed until the next day, when this large gentleman of the hearty, corn-belt manner thought I should be all right again. He said he would be within call throughout the day, by the telephone at my bed, and after a settlement of our account, he withdrew from my presence, forever. I liked the man; he was a genuine home-grown melon, with the real juice all there; and his society was the first thing I had met since my arrival in my native city which restored in me anything like regard for Indiana.

After several hours in bed I got up, dressed and cautiously tried out walking slowly up and down the room. It wasn't easy going, but still nothing alarming happened.... In the morning I unlocked my door and made my way to the elevator. I progressed along the lobby without disaster, and leaving the hotel moved up the street at the rate of an ill-preserved man of ninety. At Washington Street, I came to another good hotel, where I entered the barber shop for a much-needed shave. There is, of course, that old story—which reflects the sentiments of many—of the gentleman who, when asked by the barber how he would have his hair cut, thundered, "In silence". That attitude toward barbers, however, has never been my notion. Barbers have always been newspapers, of an excellent kind; and since their greatest rival in this rôle, the bartender, has gone out, a man, I think, owes it to himself to cultivate the conversation of barbers as much as possible.

So, to put the barber in a communicative frame of mind, I told him the story of my death and resurrection. This interested him greatly. He told me in turn how sick he himself had been a year ago; what an unhealthy winter they had just had in Indianapolis; and, drifting off from this subject, he took up a discussion of politics, and gave me a general view of the local situation—from his point of view. Indeed, before I was shaved and massaged and shampooed, I knew more about recent local conditions than I should have known had I been reading the home papers for the past month. I had noticed that the bar-room at the hotel where I was stopping, and the bar-room in this hotel, had been converted into bright little affairs labeled "Coffee Shops". I commented on this fact to the barber. Yes, he said, there was nothing doing in the way of "saloons" in Indianapolis any more. But, he added, "the bootleggers were so thick they had to wear badges to keep from trying to sell the stuff to each other." Never, my friend, neglect the highly valuable conversation of barbers.

I was but a short way, as I remembered it, from the office of Meredith Nicholson; so I thought that, exercising extreme caution in my movements, I would try to get there. The things which bothered me most were the street-cars and motor-cars: I could not well hurry in front of one, and I had a distaste to collapsing there. However, I made the building in safety. There I ran up against a snag. This was occasioned by the secrecy

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which Mr. Nicholson, in common apparently with all other Indianapolis writers, maintains about the place where he does his writing. His name is not on the hall-directory of the bank building where he works. I knew from former experience that it was not on the door of his office. The elevator "starter" and the elevator men are so well "fixed" that they know him not.

The "starter" suggested that I might telephone him. But how was I to telephone him when he has no number given in the book? So I decided to make a try, as best I could from my rather dim recollection of the location of his room. My guess, luckily, came down heads the first throw.

I gave the mystic rap, which I recalled. Tall and straight, square-shouldered—and—solidly—made, chest held well forward, head held firmly back, countenance sculptured somewhat in the large mold of the bust of a Roman emperor, much dignity (I suspect unconscious), much quiet self-possession, much courtesy (in which are blended naturalness and formality), much kindliness of heart apparent, and much (subdued) native friendliness toward mankind, modestly, but quite correctly, dressed in dark colors—Nick!

Replying to my comment on the difficulties of finding him, he remarked that the other day he heard that a man had been offering five dollars for his office address—though, he added, he believed everybody in town knew where he was. Said he had been expecting someone. Knock at the door: reporter. A statement sought on the local political situation. Given. "Don't quote me", said Nick.

Telephone rang: something about some motion-picture stuff he was doing. As to the pictures: what a possibility they presented! And how rawly they have been developed as yet! Suppose Homer ("whether he was a man or a syndicate") had worked for "the screen", and had been able to produce his tale as he wanted it, what a tremendous live thing today would be "the greatest dime novel ever written"—the Odyssey! And Milton, if he had created "Paradise Lost" as a "movie"! Rather stunning notions, I felt.

But, of course, we should not, then, have these things as the great monuments, that they are, of literature. Indeed, he seemed to be rather on the fence in regard to, so to say, these two forms of art—"movies" and letters; and deplored, wagging his head, the passing of "reading times", when our fathers and our mothers used to sit at home in the evenings and read Dickens and Hawthorne and Thackeray, "aloud to one another".

As I was suffering all this while a good deal inside, came up the subject of my dramatic arrival in town. Nicholson was decidedly more exercised about the matter than I had been at any time throughout it, in fact, considerably excited. Why hadn't I let him know? Any time of the day or night! And where was it I was? Why, man that owned that place was a great friend of his. Immediately got him on the wire. Gave him what is commonly called "a talking to". Told him, with much vigor, a lot of guff: that I (yes, your own Murray Hill) was "America's leading essayist", and was "conferring a great distinction" on his place by "condescending to stop there". Couldn't have any common, ordinary, hotel physician. Must have everything best in the house. Or, well, the country would rise up against him, or something like that. Scared the poor chap, I guess, into believing all this was so.

And now we must get the best ad-

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vice obtainable on this matter. So round we would go to Dr. Carleton B. McCulloch. Now, this Dr. McCulloch may be known as any one of a number of highly distinguished things. He may be known as a physician to the *literati* of Indiana: he was Riley's physician, and he has long "doctored" Nicholson and Tarkington. He may be known as Lieutenant-Colonel McCulloch, who six weeks after war was declared between the United States and Germany abandoned the "largest practice in Indianapolis" (according to Tarkington) to enlist as a captain, and who after eighteen months of service in France was decorated by the French government with the Croix de Guerre for evacuating a hospital under fire. Or as so charming and witty a gentleman that Hugh Walpole declared him to be "the most interesting man" he had met in America. Or (at the present writing) as a candidate for the Democratic nomination for Governor of Indiana.

Now, I have always been exceedingly reluctant to butt in on the solemn concerns of statesmen to tell them that I was not feeling very well. But Nick dragged me along. On the way, I learned that at about the time he wrote his first novel, he had suffered a seizure very similar to mine, then had (as he believed) chummed with the Reaper for a number of years, but as these had now grown to be twenty or more, and he had not died yet, he had become rather accustomed to the situation, and did not mind it much any more. He declared, however, that I had him all wrong (in an account of him I one time wrote), as a gentleman as cool (as we say) as a cucumber. He was really very nervous, excitable, impulsive, passionate, and I know not what other highly explosive things, and the effect that I had described was merely his "front".

I think there used to be there on one door a neat inscription stating that this was the office of Dr. McCulloch. Now on a long transom extending across two rooms was painted in large "caps", "McCulloch Campaign Headquarters". And the apartments within were a scene of resounding activity.

Dr. McCulloch bumped into us amid the throng; Mr. Nicholson stated the case; I endeavored to excuse myself from interrupting the candidate; and he declared that in a matter of such momentous concern to literature as this, "the affairs of state would have to wait".

They did not, however, wait long. Dr. McCulloch looked into me with a periscope, which he borrowed from a physician hard by, and who is to take over his practice in the event of his election; dashed into the next room for a hand in the conference there; dashed out again with a prescription in his hand, and the counsel that "there is no need for worry", and disappeared again in the hum.

* * * *

At my hotel I found awaiting me a letter from the proprietor, a hearty young gentleman, hereinafter to be called Mr. Gates—'tis an excellent name, and will do as well as another. He said that he was somewhat of a man of letters himself, having "read an essay once. It was," he continued, "one of Nick's own, and very good, I remember—all about Mr. Smith and why he went to church." And he (Mr. Gates) would present himself at the first opportunity.

The next day, at luncheon with him and Mr. Nicholson, I began my studies into the life of a proprietor of a first-class city hotel. It's an interesting field of investigation, which I am resolved to pursue at other stages in my travels. The stealing that goes on by

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guests of hotels, apparently, is frequently quite picturesque.

Know that at this hotel, in the "Blue Room"—the most elaborate dining-room, very prettily decorated—live six small, pale yellow canaries. In six enormous yellow cages (each on a tall stem) they live, which, placed (each cage between two tables) three on a side of the aisle, make a noble avenue down the middle of the room. Well (so much for the setting), this is the story: one day one of the canaries was stolen—sprang out of its cage in the dining-room.

And another day, out of this same dining-room, was stolen a silver plate, forty-two inches in diameter. Man stuck it under his coat. Very tall, colored waiter (at our table now) ran out and after him. Plate recovered. The number of ashtrays, towels, sheets, etc., stolen in one year from such a hotel as this, I am told, passes calculation.

But the most entertaining theft of all of which I heard was this: some passing pilgrim stole the mattress on his bed. Had moved in an empty trunk, or one nearly so, apparently having this novel idea in mind. (A box of springs on the bed, clothed in bed covers, would give nearly the effect of the mattress being there.) "And so", exclaimed Mr. Gates, "he got my own help to steal my own stuff for him—to get his trunks down!"

But I have overlooked a matter—you will find many things somewhat out of their natural order in this History of the Life and Times of Murray Hill.

The day before, on my return to my quarters, I found the publicity man of my hotel on the lookout for me. "Now we must get," he said, as we began work on the interview with the distinguished guest for the local morning papers, "the name of the hotel well up at the top." Then he dropped away into reminiscences of his career, for which I am highly grateful.

"Several years ago", he said, "shortly after the hotel opened, there was a circus coming to town, and the people were going to put up here. I saw a chance for a big story. And they agreed to send on in advance a baby camel, for exhibition in the lobby. Well, when the camel got here, there wasn't much of the baby about him; he was the biggest camel I ever did see, and there was no way at all of getting him through the door. So we marched him around outside, followed by a pretty good-sized gallery.

"But", he said, and indignation was with him still, "when the papers printed the story, they got the camel in all right, without any mention at all of the name of either the hotel or the circus! And where did I get off as a publicity man!"

This time, however, we got across in the morning papers, the name of the hotel, as well as an account of the camel.

And directly after breakfast up turns a man from an evening paper. Now, I had never seen this young man before in my life. He had never before seen me. Nor had I ever even heard of him. Well, then, as sprightly ladies who write vivacious reminiscences of literary life say, "judge of my astonishment" when, at the conclusion of our interview, he took from his pocket and presented to me a faded daguerreotype of a figure in the uniform of an officer in the Union Army of the Civil War. The face had a remarkably familiar look. "Turn it over," said the young man. And, on the back of the card I saw written in pencil the name, Will Hill. "I think," said the young man, "this is a photograph of your father. It was found in the old home of my family a few

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days before you came to town. Perhaps you would care to have it." Now, my father's name was Wilbur; but those who knew him when he was young (and I was about to say handsome, but he was that to the last), and at the time of, as Riley says, "the army", always called him Will. And I have no doubt that, in this strange way, has come into my hands an authentic portrait of him, which I knew not existed. (Mr. Nicholson claims the exclusive rights to the use in fiction of this story.)

Nick stood the check for the luncheon. He has a humorous trick, it appears, for the education of the waiters and the cashier here. After his signature, he writes on each meal check a line or so of quotation from the poets. Today this was:

The hounds of Spring are on Winter's traces.

To Mr. and Mrs. Gates it was that he dedicated a novel of his called "Lady Larkspur". In acknowledgment of this Mrs. Gates sent him a handsome silver plate, together with a large sheaf of larkspur, which she had taken considerable trouble to procure. Nick didn't know larkspur from a goat. Said to Mrs. Nicholson: "Put the fine plate away, throw the weeds into the back yard."

* * * *

All this time, you know, I was merely crawling about, and scared of every step; for notwithstanding Dr. McCulloch's assurances there continued to be something dreadfully wrong with my inner machinery. It was the next day, on the street, when, suddenly, I became conscious that I was much better. Distress of mind, at any rate, had mysteriously quite left me. I felt again something of the thrill of living. How had this come about? And so quickly!

An instant—and it suddenly was made clear to me. I knew I should not die—for quite a while yet. I discovered that I had regained possession of a great gift; I was viewing with the pleasure of admiration the spectacle of numbers of charming-looking women passing to and fro.

And so, with a step sturdier than for a number of days, I proceeded (Mr. Nicholson having once again given me a guest card there) to the University Club of Indiana, which, as one of the pleasantest clubs in the land, I have so well described elsewhere.

There is as hall-boy there a young Japanese. He received my hat and coat, erect and silent, with completely disinterested courtesy, and with that absolute immobility of countenance which perhaps only a Jap can attain. I had been for a little while writing some letters in a room to one side, when I heard Booth Tarkington's hoarse voice booming out in the hall. I hopped up and went to meet him. He greeted me in the cordial Tarkington way. Wearing a black derby, a dark overcoat, and his stick, he presented a decidedly gentlemanly effect. For several moments we talked. Then he went downstairs, or upstairs, or somewhere; and I returned to my writing.

When I was ready to go, the Jap boy appeared, strangely changed. His beads of black eyes beamed upon me approval. When he had got me into my overcoat and had handed me my hat, he bowed very low, very low, and (like a flunky on the stage) extending toward me with outstretched arm my stick, he pronounced (the rascal must have looked up my name), with the deference of veneration, these words: "Mr. Hill".

MURRAY HILL

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TWO NOISY ROMAN SCHOOLMASTERS

BY JOSEPH COLLINS

THE most diverting and conspicuous figures in the literary world of Italy today are two old schoolteachers of Rome—Alfredo Panzini, humanist, and Luigi Pirandello, satirist. Both of them have earned a permanent fame and their fecundity seems to be increasing with age.

Alfredo Panzini, a pedagogue by profession, is a writer by dint of long training. Born in Sengaglia, a small town in the Province of the Marches, in 1863, he called Carducci master. After serving a long literary apprenticeship compiling grammars, readers, dictionaries, and anthologies, his name began to appear in magazines; and gradually he has forged his way to the front rank as an episodist, an interpreter of the feelings and sentiments of the average man and woman and their spokesman, and as a master of prose.

In appearance he is a typical lower middle-class Italian, short, stout, and ruddy; a kindly benevolent face, with contented eyes that look at you inquiringly from behind gold-rimmed spectacles. One might gather from looking at him that he had asked but little from the world, and got more than he had asked.

His writings display an intimate familiarity with a few classic writers, especially of Greece and Italy, which he reveals by frequent and appropriate quotations and references, contrasting the sayings and doings of the venerated ancients with those of the not always deprecated modern. He knows the emotional desires and reactions of the average man; he senses his aspirations and his appeasements; he has keen understanding of his virtues and his infirmities. He knows his potential and actual pleasures and he reveals this understanding of his fellows to us in a diverting and instructive way; at the same time he shows us idealistic vistas of life and conduct that are most refreshing. It is to be regretted that he is not equally enlightened about women. If he knows their aspirations he denies the legitimacy of these aspirations; if he discerns their future he refuses to forecast it; if he knows feminine psychology his writings do not reveal it. He is the traveler ascending from the plains whose pleasure is in looking backward to survey the paths over which he has traveled, to describe the beauty of the country and its associations and to moralize about them. Elevations in front of him from which one may legitimately anticipate more comprehensive vistas he refuses to consider, or if constrained to do so, he denies that what shall be seen from them will compare with what he sees and has seen.

His two most successful and com-

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mendable books are "La Lanterna di Diogene" (Diogenes's Lantern), and "Xantippe". The first is a narrative of sentimental wandering in which he describes the commonplace world and the homely conflict of those whom he encounters, and in which he displays not only tolerance but love of his fellow men. He is sometimes playful, more often ironical, but never disparaging or vituperative, and his prose is clear, limpid, sometimes indeed sparkling.

His "Xantippe" does not deal particularly with the virtues or infirmities of that renowned shrew. It recounts many incidents in the life, trial, and incarceration of Socrates which, while still redounding to his fame, are made to show by contrast with man's conduct and customs today the weaknesses, inconsistencies, and fallacies of many conventions of the twentieth century.

"Il Viaggio di un Povero Letterato" (The Wanderings of a Poor Writer) shows the same simple-minded, charming vagabondage as "Diogenes's Lantern". It was published in 1912 and many readers did not share his distrust of Germany or hold with him in his forecasts. Many of his statements are today prophesies fulfilled.

It is not an imaginary man of letters who starts on a trip in obedience to a doctor's orders. It is Alfredo Panzini exhausted from many labors. He goes wherever his fancy takes him —to Vicenza, Bologna, Pisa, Venice —and it is with the literary memories of these places that he is chiefly concerned. At Pisa it is Leopardi, Shelley, and Byron; at Vicenza, Fogazzaro; but at Bologna the memories become more personal. Here he sat at the feet of Carducci and learned to love and respect him; here his budding fancies first showed indications of blooming; here he first essayed amatory flights. He chances upon an old flame of his student days leading the old life in the old home, except that she has taken to writing poems and insists on having his opinion of them. His account of how he succeeded in meeting her wishes and still maintained his self-respect is a masterpiece of ingenuousness. The least thing suffices to start a train of thought and reflection or to decide his next tarrying place. The volume ends with an interesting account of a visit to the birthplace of Pascoli, the socialist and idealist poet of the Romagna.

In his "Piccole Storie del Mondo Grande" he describes a pilgrimage to the country of Leopardi, and to Umbria. It is filled with little anecdotes of literary immortals who wandered there and of references that are more significant to Italians than to foreigners; through it all there is a strange, melancholy humor which is quite characteristic of Panzini.

The two novels which he has written show that he has the art of the story-teller in narration, sequence, and constructiveness but the stories lack what the dramatists call action. This is particularly true of "Io Cerco Moglie" (I Seek a Wife).

Signore Panzini is not what is called a Feminist fan; and he utilizes Ginetto Sconer, who is seeking the ideal mate, as a mouthpiece for his own convictions and sentiments concerning women. Italy is likely to be one of the last countries that will yield woman the freedom for emotional and intellectual development to which she is entitled; and when it comes, as it is bound to do, it will be despite the kindly and sentimental protests and ironies of oppositionists such as Panzini.

"La Madonna di Mamma" (The Ma-

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donna of Mama) is, in addition to a splendid character study, a revelation of the disturbance caused in a gentle and meditative soul, his own, by the war. For in reality, like so many Italian writers, Panzini is autobiographical in everything that he writes. In this book he has shown more insight into feminine psychology than in any of his other writings; though he is more successful with Donna Barberina, who represents modern Italian emotional repressions, than with the English governess Miss Edith, who forecasts in a timid way what her countrywomen have obtained. Nevertheless the strength of the story is the evolution of the moral and intellectual nature of Aquilino, to whom the reader is partial from the first page, and of Count Hippolyte who is "too good to be true". Aquilino is what Alfredo Panzini would have been had he encountered Conte Ippolito in his early youth. The reader who makes his acquaintance identifies him with the future glory of Italy—the youth who has no facilitation to success save ideals and integrity.

Many of his short stories such as "Novelle di Ambi Sessi" (Stories of Both Sexes) and "Le Chicche di Neretta" (The Gewgaws of Little Nora) have elicited great praise. Today Panzini has the reputation of being one of the most gifted writers of Italy. He has come to his patrimony very slowly. Without being in the smallest way like George Meredith or Henry James, his writings have experienced a reception similar to theirs in so far as it has been said of them that they are hard to understand. It is difficult for a foreigner to give weight to this accusation. The reader who once gets a familiarity with them becomes an enthusiast. To him Panzini is one of the most readable of all Italian writers. To be sure, if one reads "Xantippe" it is to be expected that more or less will be said about Socrates and about the customs and habits of Athens of that day. The same is true of "Diogenes's Lantern". It is also likely that when a man of literary training and taste wanders about the country writing of his encounters, he will be likely to write of people and things which when others read them will presuppose a certain culture; but the reader who has the misfortune to lack it need not hesitate to read the books of Panzini. He will have a certain degree of it after he has read them, and he will get possessed of it without effort. It is not at all unlikely that Panzini writes his stories and novels in much the same way that he writes his dictionaries—namely, laboriously. His later writings have some indication of having been thrown off in a white heat of creative passion without preparation or conscious premeditation; but most of his books bear the hallmarks of careful planning, methodical execution, painstaking revision—and careful survey after completion, that the writer may be sure that his creation exposed to the gaze and criticism of his fellow beings shall be as perfect as he can make it, both from his own knowledge and from the knowledge of others that has been assimilated by him.

The position which Panzini holds in the Italian world of letters today is the index of the protest against the writings of D'Annunzio. Panzini is sane, normal, human, gentle, kindly. He sees the facts of life as they are; he fears the ascendency of materialism; his hopes are that man's evolutionary progress shall be spiritual, and he does not anticipate the advent of a few supermen who shall administer the affairs of the planet.

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Alfredo Panzini is likely finally to get a place in Italian letters comparable to that of Pascoli, and should his call to permanent happiness be delayed until he has achieved the days allotted by the Psalmist, he is likely to have the position in Italian letters which Joseph Conrad has in English letters today. This statement is not tantamount to an admission that it is to writers like Panzini we are to look for new developments in imaginative literature. They will be found rather among a group of writers who are the very antithesis of him—the Futurists.

The successor to the literary fame of Giacosa is Luigi Pirandello, another Roman schoolmaster. His earlier writings were cast as romances but latterly he has confined himself largely to stage pieces which reflect our moralities, satirize our conventions, and lampoon our hypocrisies. His diction is idiomatic and telling. It reminds one of de Maupassant and of Bernard Shaw. Either he inherited an unusual capacity for verbal expression or he has cultivated it assiduously.

He is Panzini's junior by three years, having been born in Girgenti, June 28, 1867. His father was an exporter of sulphur and his early life was spent among the simple, passionate, emotional, tradition-loving people of Southern Sicily. Unlike his fellow Sicilians, Verga and Capuana, he has not utilized them to any considerable degree as the mouthpiece of his satiric comments and reflections on social life. He has taken the more sophisticated if less appealing people of Northern and Central Italy, and put them in situations from which they extricate themselves or get themselves more hopelessly entangled for the reader's amusement or edification. In his last comedy "L'Uomo la Bestia e la Virtu" (Man, Beast, and Virtue) the scene is laid "in a city on the sea, it doesn't matter where", yet the characters are typically Sicilian.

After graduating from the University of Rome, Pirandello studied at Bonn and made some translations of Goethe's "Roman Elegies". Soon after he returned to Rome, he published a book of verse and a book of short stories which made no particular stir. It was not until he published "Il fu Mattia Pascal" (The Late Matthias Pascal) that he obtained any real success. Critics consider it still his best effort in the field of romance. From the standpoint of construction it deserves the commendation that it has received; but both the luck and the plans of the hero are too successful to be veristic, and the eventuations of his daily existence so far transcend ordinary experience that the reader feels the profound improbability of it all, and loses interest. One pursues a novel that he may see the revelations of his own experiences, or what he might wish his experiences to be under certain circumstances. When these circumstances get out of hand or when the events that transpire are so improbable, or so antipathic, that the reader cannot from his experience or imagination consider them likely or probable, then the novel does not interest him. Moreover the Anglo-Saxon reader, unless he has lived in Italy, finds the flavor of many passages "too high"; certain experiences are related in unnecessary detail. Like a cubist picture the charm and the beauty disappear in proportion to the nearness with which it is viewed and the closeness with which it is examined.

In reality Pirandello did not get his stride until he began to concern himself with social and domestic problems,

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such as those depicted under the title of "Maschere Nude" (Transparent Masks). In the play "Il Piacere dell' Onesta" (The Pleasure of Honesty) he pictures a new type of *ménage à trois:* the "unhappy" husband in love with the mature daughter of an aristocratic Philistine mother, who, when she must needs have a husband for conventional satisfaction, appeals to a facile male cousin who finds in a ne'er-do-well disciple of Descartes one who is willing to act the part vicariously, the apparent quid pro quo being the payment of his gambling debts. The hypocritical, bombastic lover; the sentimental mother with a "family complex"; the anguishing, passionate daughter; the suave, aristocratic, male procurer, and finally he who was to be the victim of the machinations of these experienced persons, but who proves to be the victor because he plays the game in a way new to them, that is, straight—each in turn delivers himself of sentiments and convictions that reveal the social hypocrisies and conventional lies which form the scaffolding and supports of what is called "everyday life", and give Pirandello an opportunity to display his irony, his sarcasm, and his humor. The art of Pirandello is a subtle play of paradoxes and analysis of motives which are second-nature to persons called complex, the result of inherited and acquired artificialities. To get the full effect of these paradoxes and analyses the close attention of the reader and of the auditor is required, and as a matter of fact Pirandello's comedies read much better than they play. Those who know maintain that he has little capacity for stage technique, that he knows nothing of the art of the stage. Hence his comedies have not had the success of those of Giacosa and of Bracco.

As human documents they depend upon their humor and veiled irony more than upon any other qualities. The humor, which seems to be obtained by simple means, is nearly always the result of an analysis so fine, so subtle, that sometimes one loses track of the premises on which it is founded. He compels the attention of his reader and he makes him think. Without such attention and thought the subtleties of Pirandello often escape the reader. Sometimes he labors a point almost to a tiresome degree—for instance, in the play "Cosi e" (It's so if you think it's so). The central point is the identity of a woman which, it would seem to the average individual, could be established readily beyond peradventure; but the point is, is there anything that can be established beyond peradventure? Is there any such thing as literal truth? Is not truth in reality synonymous with belief, individual or collective or both? Discussion of questions of this sort may become very tiresome; but Pirandello has the art of mixing them up with human weaknesses and human virtues, which makes the mixture not only palatable but appetizing. In his last comedies, "Il Giuco delle Parti" (Each One Plays His Own Rôle) and "Ma non e una Cosa Seria" (But it isn't a Serious Matter), he reverts to matrimonial tangles and to attempts at disentanglement: depicting in the former comedy the "temperamental" woman—who gets what she wants but who finds when she gets it she does not want it—and the long-suffering husband—who is discerning enough to know how to handle her; concedes what she demands that he may get what he should have.

The man who usurps the conjugal privileges of the husband must also discharge his obligations. So it tran-

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spires that when his temperamental wife has been insulted by some intoxicated gilded youths, who by their conduct in her house provoke a scandal in the neighborhood, it is necessary for the de facto husband to challenge the most aggressive of them to a duel. During the excitement of the preparation, the happy thought comes to him to have the vicarious husband fight the duel. He does so and is killed. The cause of all the trouble, the lady, is quite ignorant of this arrangement, and thinks the de facto husband is battling with the most invincible sword of the city and that he will get killed—which is her desire. On returning to her house she finds her husband lunching as if nothing unusual had happened. The dramatic climax soon comes when she scornfully taunts him with having someone fight a duel for him, and he replies, "Not for me but for you".

The play gives Pirandello the opportunity to display his knowledge of the sentiments and passions of the modern "high life" individual. Although his characters talk and act and express familiar sentiments in a way that makes one think they are real people, in reality they are unreal. They are taken from the author's imagination rather than from real life.

The second comedy in this volume is much more meritorious than the first. The author portrays characters who well might have existed in the flesh. Gasparina, who has put twenty-seven years of continency behind her and has achieved the direction of a second-class boarding house, is derided and maltreated by her "guests". The most swagger of her boarders, who has been miraculously saved in a duel which followed a broken engagement, has an original idea. He will make a mock marriage with her, and thus establish freedom from further love, and annoyance, and duels. She sees in the proposal escape from the boarding house. In the little villa in the country—to which he sends her under promise that she is not to make herself evident and where he is not to visit her—she blooms like a flower. In due course of time he falls in love again, and in order that he may accomplish matrimony he must free himself from Gasparina. This could be accomplished as it never was consummated; but when the messenger, an old aspirant to her favor, is on the point of having his aspirations realized, the husband—in name only—sees in Gasparina the woman he really loves. The curtain falls at an opportune moment before any hearts are broken or any blood is shed.

It is one of the plays of Pirandello that has had considerable success on the stage.

He is in reality a finished workman, an accomplished stylist, a happy colorist, and fecund withal. His most important stories are "Erma bifronte" (Deceitful Hermes), "La Vita Nuda" (Naked Life), "La Trappola" (The Snare), "e Domani...lunedi" (And Tomorrow—Monday), "un Cavallo Nella Luna" (A Horse in the Moon), "Quand ero Matto" (When I Was Crazy), "Bianche e Nere" (Black and White). His romances, in addition to the ones already mentioned, are "I Vecchi e I Giovanni" (The Old and the Young), and "Si Gira" (One Turns)—the most recent and poorest of them.

It would be a mistake to convey the impression that Pirandello is universally admired in Italy. His stories and romances have an adventuresome quality that transcends ordinary experience, and his plays attempt to dispense with theatricalness and to sub-

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stitute for it a subtle analysis of life with corrosive comment. Both of these qualities are very much resented.

It is strange that the Freudians have never explained the popularity of plays and novels concerned wholly or largely with sexual relations that infract convention and law, as a dominancy of the unconscious mind—a "wish fulfilment" of the waking state. It may be assumed that three-fourths of those who see and read them never have and never contemplate (with their conscious minds) having similar experiences, and they would be scandalized were anyone to assume that they approved such conduct. Perhaps the explanation of the hold these works have upon the public is the same as that of the interest we have in the accounts of criminals seeking to evade apprehension. It is not that we sympathize in any way with the malefactor. We are law-making, law-abiding, law-upholding citizens and we know he ought not to escape, and, naturally, we hope he will be caught. However, we cannot help thinking what we would do, confronted with his predicament. We feel that in his place we could circumvent the sleuths, and overcome what would be to the ordinary person insuperable obstacles. Thus we divert ourselves imagining what we would do if we were adulterous husbands, lecherous wives, lubricous wooers, vicarious spouses—while assuring ourselves we are not and could never be; and plume ourselves that we could conduct ourselves, even in nefariousness, in such a way as to escape detection or, if detected, to disarm criticism. Meanwhile we enjoy being virtue-rewarded and vice-punished, for only upon the stage or in books does it happen, save in exceptional instances.

THE LONDONER

Mrs. Humphry Ward—Political Novels—A Lampoon on Mrs. Ward—Henry James Letters—Helen Mathers—Rhoda Broughton—Reading for Pleasure and the Peculiarities of Writers—The Rothensteins—Douglas Goldring—Criticism of Contemporaries—D. H. Lawrence—Rebecca West—Stacy Aumonier—Iris Tree.

LONDON, *April* 1, 1920.

THE death of Mrs. Humphry Ward removes from the literary arena a figure which was imposing rather than important. Mrs. Ward had her success so many years ago that she unfortunately outlived the superstition attaching to "Robert Elsmere", a fact of which her recently published Reminiscences showed her to be unaware. Her relationship to Matthew Arnold stood her in good stead in the early days, as did the admiration of Mr. Gladstone; but of late she had been almost universally rated low as an original writer, and many who, if she had begun publishing later, would have extolled the rather commonplace solemnity of her pseudo-political novels found themselves perfectly in order

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in regarding her as a past master in an art now practised by children not yet in their teens. It was a sad fate. To start off in a sudden lustre, and to end as one commonly ridiculed, is a hard lot for anybody. Unfortunately it is true that Mrs. Ward's best work was done early. Also, that the huge novels which impressed our fathers by their slight intellectual pretentiousness became quickly stale and good for nothing. I can remember the day when I read such novels as "Sir George Tressady" and "David Grieve" and believed them to be the genuine article. I had never dreamed of novels which so gave me the sense of acquaintance with the political world and the world of the aspiring youth who found his delights in the intellect. "Robert Elsmere" I never much cared for, but that was because I felt it to be intellectually beyond me. This was simply because I was exceedingly young when it came my way. And I can still recall solemnly reading an essay by Gilbert Chesterton praising "Helbeck of Bannisdale" as a novel of the highest class. It is strange to look back upon those days.

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It is strange, for one reason, because I long ago ceased to regard Chesterton as a reliable guide in the criticism of literature (it was his work on Browning which opened my eyes), and it is not less strange because from the days of "Lady Rose's Daughter" and "The Marriage of William Ashe" I have found the novels of Mrs. Ward simply unreadable. If it were not for the fact that I recently had occasion to read "Cousin Philip" —about which I said a few words in a recent causerie—I should know nothing whatever about the later developments of a talent which had gone straight into the conventional and mechanical production of novels for library subscribers. The vogue of Mrs. Ward is not hard to understand in view of what I have said above. The majority of people know nothing at all about the inner life of the political world. Mrs. Ward seemed to lift the curtain. We saw, as we thought, straight into the privacy of the Prime Ministers' homes. It was nothing like the reality, as I am now aware; but to anybody who has not seen the great at close quarters it was quite bafflingly life-like. We all felt that these men and women were really the upper classes about whom we speculated. We felt that at last we knew what went on in high political circles; and we were properly thrilled. Well, as soon as we suspected that Mrs. Ward had been "having us on", we threw her over as a delineator of high life. We threw her over with contumely. I will now reveal whose work it was that nailed up Mrs. Ward's coffin. It was the work of H. G. Wells.

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You will all remember that Wells suddenly branched off into "Tono Bungay" and "The New Machiavelli". Those two books settled Mrs. Ward's hash. Wells was not a politician in the ordinary sense, and he has his defects; but his books were real. He was obviously dealing with a kind of life about which he had ideas. Mrs. Ward's books were, in a manner of speaking, dead. Her characters were, not so much types, as sawdust-stuffed creatures of no gumption. Their stuff was such as reams are made of. All the daring went out of Mrs. Ward's novels. They were seen to be humdrum. Here was something new and exciting. The game was up. From that time, Mrs. Ward's sales were no longer mentioned proudly by her publishers in hundreds or even eighties

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of thousands. They sank to discreet and uncommunicative "impressions".

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There is a wicked lampoon upon Mrs. Ward in Arnold Bennett's "Sacred and Profane Love"—the play. It is not at all malicious, but it represents a somewhat heightened lady novelist whose self-satisfaction is excessive. No doubt Bennett had read the book of Reminiscences. In that book Mrs. Ward was a little restive, a little subconsciously uncertain of her position in the public eye, and so she made the mistake of quoting the opinions of her work expressed by famous friends of a past generation. They "cut no ice". Also, she made the mistake of sizing up her juniors, rather patronizingly. Wells and Bennett came in for it—Bennett being praised at Wells's expense. This was an error of judgment on Mrs. Ward's part. Bennett's chief characteristic as a man is his remarkable loyalty to his friends. Moreover, one has only to turn to that little book, "Books and Persons", which ought to be in the bedroom of every lover of literature, to see what Bennett thinks of Wells.

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Of course, Henry James thought very highly of Mrs. Ward. He had eulogized her. It counted in his favor as a friend, but not to his credit as a literary critic. Perhaps we shall understand the lapse better when we are able to read James's letters. These are to be published in a few weeks from now, so we shall have an opportunity of examining them. This book is one of the things I am genuinely looking forward to. I have always thought that those who sneered at James's pomposity and his moral timidity and his literary elaboration of the trivial were horribly wrong and disgustingly ungenerous. Hardly a young novelist of our day but has owed to James a great deal of his education in his craft. Even Wells has some passages in the two books of his which I have just mentioned which are quite obviously influenced by the lessons of a master. One can say many things about James, but one should not lightly cast off recognition of his scrupulousness, and the revelations he made of the working of the human mind. We must not confuse his work with that of some of his disciples. The two things are entirely distinct.

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Another old novelist to die just lately is Helen Mathers. I must admit that her work is an old tale with me. That I have read several of her novels I am sure; but precisely which of them it would be impossible to say. And yet they had a curious freshness and vivacity in their day. Helen Mathers was not a pretentious novelist: she was even, at times, rather a naughty novelist. But that is all forgotten, and I only mention her death through a wish to record an event which may not have stirred as much attention as it might have done in America.

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A contemporary of hers—Rhoda Broughton—was described in a recent BOOKMAN as having finished a new novel. Now I must admit to being a great admirer of Rhoda Broughton. She seems to me the nearest thing in spirit to Jane Austen that we have had in recent times. I read a few years ago a novel called "Concerning a Vow". One would have said that the story—the "story" as distinct from the author's manner—was ridiculous, if one had not recognized it as the story of Sir Thomas Lawrence and his unhappy loves; but there could not be two opinions about the way in which the characters talked. True, it was old-fashioned, in one sense; but the

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point of it, the delightful whimsicalness and roguery of it, was unmistakable. It was the work of a mistress of the difficult art of conversation. In one of her novels, "Belinda", Miss Broughton gave the story of Mark Pattison and his wife, afterward Lady Dilke. Here again, although the book has an "old-world air" (as they say in England), it retained all the freshness of the spirit by which it was vitalized when the pen first recorded its author's lively inventions. Miss Broughton's novel is one which I shall infallibly read—for pleasure. I wish there were more authors of whose works I could say as much.

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I know, of course, that this will strike readers as very arrogant. Let it. I will repeat my remark, in a different way. There are very few novelists to the publication of new books by whom I look forward with pleasure. With interest, yes! With apprehensiveness, yes! With the expectation of being moved and impressed, yes! But with pleasure, no! A thousand "noes". And that is a remarkable thing, for there are few books I am unable to read. It is true that I have said above how impossible I found it to read Mrs. Ward's later books. Well, I found it impossible. But in general there are few novels which I am above reading. "Shaftesbury is not too genteel for me, nor 'Jonathan Wild' too low." I do not say I like them; but only that I am not a literary snob. And this is a very singular subject, for I have heard of a young woman flinging a book by Robert Louis Stevenson across the room in disgust. I have never done such a thing. I have heard of people cruelly reading the work of a poor writer and maliciously gloating over its deformities. I have only twice gloated over books with ribald laughter. No, three times. And I am not going to tell you the names of those three books. One was a work on the English language. Another was a memoir by the brother of the subject. One was a hectic novel by a young novelist who might have known better, but who shows no signs of learning anything at all with increasing years. I cannot remember laughing cruelly at any other books. I wonder if that is a virtue, or merely an unperceptiveness.

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What is it that makes a book readable or unreadable? I do not know. Very likely there is some subtle aroma from it, just as there is from humans, which does the trick. Why, when one sees a title, does one sometimes feel disposed or indisposed to read a book? That is another question. I cannot answer it. But you will find that we are all sensitive to these things, and that we cannot give, however logical, reasons for our instinctive tastes and distastes. If we could, we could reason ourselves out of them, or into them. We do not do this. We do not make any attempt to do it. Something ineradicable in us comes sharply into control, and decides. The thing is done. There is no appeal. And we suffer from the same injustices from others. I remember hearing once of a woman who saw my portrait in an illustrated journal. She looked at it. Then she said, coolly: "I don't like the look of that man. I wouldn't read one of his books for worlds." Naturally the friend who overheard wrote to me immediately, out of the kindness of his heart. And yet that woman was obeying quite a sound impulse. If you do not like a man's face, isn't it a fair presumption that you will not like what he writes? I like to feel that perhaps I should not have cared for that woman to read my books. You never know.

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Among the spring announcements I observe a number of volumes which should have more than casual interest. One of these is a book of "Literary Portraits" by William Rothenstein. The word "literary" does not mean that the artist has been writing accounts of his subjects; but merely that all his subjects in this particular book are literary men. Some years ago I met Rothenstein pretty frequently, and also his brother, Albert (since the beginning of the war called Albert Rutherston). They are both small men, and Albert has a more vivid manner than his brother. Both, however, give the impression of having a good deal of practical energy. Will Rothenstein, of course, has done a great deal of architectural work, both in India and in England. Albert has had a certain connection with various of the Barker stage productions. He is a much younger man than his brother, and it may be that his change of name early in the war was dictated quite as much by a wish to achieve distinctness as by his desire to manifest his British allegiance. I cannot profess to be an ardent admirer of the work of either brother; but that both have rendered inestimable service to the branches of the art they have so conspicuously practised nobody would deny. Will, in his quiet, almost dry way, has really influenced, not the course of painting so much as the course of teaching in England. He has shown considerable versatility, and his work has varied as much in quality as in direction. He has a shrewd brain and clear judgment; and he has long been the friend of writers and other distinguished men outside his own craft. He is a man of extraordinary capacity. The book of portraits should thus have, even for those who do not care for Rothenstein's style, an exceptional value and interest.

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Two novels and a book about his contemporaries is the modest allowance this spring of Douglas Goldring, who has always been prolific, and who now threatens to take the world by storm in his early thirties. The novels are sure to be didactic, for Mr. Goldring, as a novelist, belongs to the school of Gilbert Cannan. But the book I am really rather interested in is one called "Reputations", in which I imagine there will be some piquant criticisms. Mr. Goldring has known a number of the writers of his own age and of somewhat inflated reputation, and I suppose him to intend some candid talk about his late friends. I judge partly from a skit which he recently contributed to a periodical called "The Chap Book", in which the young poets were laid low, and some of the other young creatures, also. It was very good-tempered, but at least one poet succeeded in having the line referring to himself erased, under a threat of hostility pursued to the uttermost limit. It will do no harm to write ironically about some of our reputations.

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At any rate, I would rather read Mr. Goldring's book than the three books announced as a series by the new firm of publishers, Leonard Parsons, Ltd. These books are "Some Contemporary Poets", by Harold Monro; "Some Contemporary Novelists (Men)", by R. Brimley Johnson; and "Some Contemporary Novelists (Women)", by the same author. To me these are fearsome works, because we are having a surfeit of books dealing with ourselves and each other. One such, recently issued in England, is by the indefatigable S. P. B. Mais,

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now a master at Tonbridge, lecturer to the employees of W. H. Smith and Son on the subject of literature, and recently appointed Professor of English Literature to the Royal Air Force. Mr. Mais's enthusiasm is like that of the young man in "Othello". He is forever exclaiming, "Why, this is a more excellent song than the other!" The result is bewildering, for enthusiasm so unfailing is hard to follow. Mr. Mais's book has had a curious press, for even his friends think it necessary, it appears, to rap him over the knuckles. Thus we have the strange incident of an adverse review in "The Observer", a paper in which many of Mr. Mais's most ardent views have been expressed with all his customary exuberance.

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In an earlier causerie I made some remarks about D. H. Lawrence for which I was rated in an American paper—because, it was said, I gave inaccurate information. As it happens, I was right, but let that pass. Lawrence, as I have mentioned, is now in Italy, and he has a new labor play announced for publication. Also, I am pleased to see that more than one Dramatic Society is producing his "Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd". If this play is seen among the signs and portents of a renascent Drama, it will make some of the recent productions of our play-producing societies look pretty shoddy. By the way, to return for a moment to my American critic: it should be borne in mind that these notes are written some time before they appear. It is therefore possible that some of them may occasionally state facts which have, so to speak, been superseded by other facts. At the time at which they are written they represent information as late as I can guarantee.

Among spring novels I observe with interest new books by Rebecca West and Stacy Aumonier. In all probability Aumonier's book is a collection of short stories, as it is called "One After Another". But as Aumonier has a distinct gift for the writing of short stories, this does not matter. It may not be generally known in the United States that Aumonier is a man of considerable versatility. He began as an "entertainer", and still gives in public little character sketches, generally written by himself. He is a sort of quick-change artist, and as this gift is coupled with the power to invent his own material, he has a decided pull over the ordinary person who laboriously learns and interprets stuff which has come from the brain of another. I observed with amusement the suggestion made recently, by one of our superior, omniscient young critics, that "Mr. Aumonier writes like a conjurer or public entertainer." It looked so much as though the young critic had "heard something".

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Rebecca West's novel will be eagerly looked for. It is called "The Judge", and if it comes up to expectation it will be very good indeed. I question whether Miss West's talent lies very decidedly in the direction of what is called "the Novel", because she has an analytic mind altogether exceptional in its precision. If that is a good thing for a novelist, well and good. If, on the other hand, it leads to either hardness or too extensive detail, then the novelist with too much brain will always have a stiff struggle to infuse genuine emotional interest into his work. Miss West is about the cleverest young woman in England. I do not know of another quite as clever. Her brain is marvelously clear. If her judgment is at times erratic, that

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is a thing which happens to all of us, and she is none the worse for a little human weakness. Whatever happens, I can promise that the new book will be worth reading. Also that it will be read with jealous scrutiny, both by Miss West's rivals and her friends. One set will look for faults and failure; the other will look for justification of the praise so lavishly given to "The Return of the Soldier". "The Judge" has a stiff gauntlet to run!

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I see that Iris Tree's "Poems" are to be published very soon by Lane. Iris Tree must be well known in America, because she only returned to England in the winter. She is, of course, the daughter of Beerbohm Tree, and has a personal charm all her own. What the poems will be like in bulk I do not know. They certainly vary a good deal in quality as one reads them in the ordinary way. But this is a case where a young author will receive, not the puffs of friends, but the serious interest of those who appreciate her personality. It sometimes happens that a young writer will attain popularity quite apart from intrinsic excellence in his or her work; but Iris Tree is not of this number. She gives the impression of being so personally sincere that one is not at all anxious to like her poems, but only to make sure that they contain the subtle essence which it is perfectly clear she has to express. For this reason I shall not be surprised if there are some very searching criticisms of her work when it is published. It is a tribute to her that her critics will take her duty seriously. And their own duty, of course. But then they always do that!

SIMON PURE

THE BEST ADVICE IN GARDENING

BY MARGARET EMERSON BAILEY

THOUGH my title is conferred less by success than by mistakes, I am what Mrs. Francis King has called a practised amateur at gardening. My plants, that is, are no longer the annual response to seed-packets that on a warm spring day have enticed me with their gaily-colored promise. They are no transient summer colony that jostle each other light-heartedly until the approach of fall, but a sober settlement that has struck root. Indeed, they have spread from the first border of irresponsible adventure. And as I have watched them encroach upon each quarter of my small domain, I have, like any ruler of an unwieldy kingdom, sought advice in government; seeking with an eagerness that is the sign of my enfeebled power, all precedents that make for order and restraint. Now that the mischief is done I would be instructed in matters of immigration, know whom to turn back from my borders, whom to admit. I would learn penal codes that would restrict and imprison those who are there; rules of public health and town plan-

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ning, in fact a whole civil code. But in my eagerness for expert knowledge I find myself in a plight. Either I am given for guidance the record of the first years of Utopia with the mistakes of practice left out. Or I am furnished with the rules of a kingdom that is administered by a whole board of comptrollers, a kingdom that in its pretentiousness and elaborate formality puts my small province to shame. Few are the books for the garden which is self-administered, and which presents itself as a practical problem with which the owner must cope.

For the inexperienced who have barely opened up territory and are desirous of hardy settlers, there are several books which furnish good lists. Of these the most practical—because narrowed down to essentials—are in "Continuous Bloom in America" and "The Practical Flower Garden". Both lists to be sure are conservative, but as a consequence invite little risk. They contain none of the new varieties which require coddling, and only those of the old which by their quick response and their lack of fastidiousness are fitted to be pioneers. Such few requirements as are necessary for their well-being are furnished by cultural directions which are clear and precise. An excellent alphabetical list is also furnished by Mr. Jenkins in "The Hardy Flower Book", Part II—together with the names of the best varieties, descriptions of their appearance, and the best methods of culture and propagation. This list is less practical because written with English gardens in mind, as is the summary of the fifty best perennials compiled by Mr. Clutton-Brock. But in both cases the value of the information bestowed outweighs the danger. Moreover, the few plants suggested which will not weather our climate, are unprocurable for the most part; and the inexperienced gardener is saved perforce from his mistakes.

Those who have stock in hand and may thus chance adventure will find a wider field of suggestion in E. H. Wilson's "Aristocrats of the Garden" and Leicester B. Holland's "The Garden Blue Book". The names to be sure suggest a rigid exclusiveness. But like all social registers, they are valuable as address books; for the numbers come crowding in to the extent of some eight hundred in the first volume. "The Garden Blue Book" has many advantages and is not merely a tabulation of the patricians. On each page there is an excellent illustration of the growing plant with careful directions as to its nurture, and on the opposite page, a school chart with a monthly record of its behavior. An unconscionable liberty one would think, to keep such tabs on aristocrats whose manners might be taken for granted. But possibly only a more austere form of "Town Topics" in which the gardener, to his delight and his profit, is made the reporter. More democratic by far, indeed an open swing of the door, is the list given by Mrs. Albee in "Hardy Plants for Cottage Gardens". In this, fields and woods are transformed into seed-beds. The list is far too inclusive, but there are many suggestions for gardeners like me who see nothing rude and uncomely in country cousins, and above all for those with a limited purse. Those of little faith and bitter experience who wish "to be shown", will find the most satisfactory illustrations of their prospective purchases in Mrs. Sedgwick's "The Garden Month by Month". The photographs, which are both beautiful and profuse, show not merely the flower but the growing

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plant and thus give an idea of its habits, its height, and appearance.

Although essential to the midsummer gaiety of the garden and a necessary adornment in its first years, annuals are accorded less attention and space. It is a pity, for even the wary are most often misled by the glowing accounts of their beauties as set forth in seed-catalogues. The mistakes, of course, need last but a season, but they are mistakes which are apt to be written in flame. Mrs. Albee gives a convenient summary which has the advantage of being divided according to color and season, thus offering all possibilities at a glance. It is, however, too large to be quite dependable, and the best to my way of thinking is in Miss Shelton's "Continuous Bloom in America". Here only the most desirable annuals are enumerated, especial stress being laid on those of easy culture, of length and wealth of bloom, and adaptability for cutting and house decoration.

In this day when the price of plants is prohibitive, especially grateful are those books which give careful directions as to "raising from seeds". Few of us have escaped the snares of the midsummer catalogues which promise from seed sown in September, a wealth of next season's bloom. Nor do we know, save at the sacrifice of our purse and our patience, which among those marked "easily grown" will fail to germinate or to come true. A frank account of her many failures and her restricted triumphs as well as the names of the few on which she feels she may count, is given by Mrs. Albee in the form of a personal narrative. Mrs. Ely's list in "The Practical Flower Garden" is more formal and more handy, while Mr. Clutton-Brock's in "Studies in Gardening", though scattered is attended by the best directions I know as to treatment in this capricious state.

Once the plants are selected there is no question as to the consultant authority on their welfare and care. No gardener can afford to be without the standard "Encyclopedia of Horticulture", by L. H. Bailey. The six volumes are expensive and bulky, but they contain in a form convenient for reference, articles written by specialists which record the requirements and histories of all available plants. And not only do these authorities put their medical knowledge of horticulture at our disposal in a language sufficiently simple for amateurs, but they have compiled a distinctly American book which is written with a careful consideration of American climates. A good supplement of household remedies and preventatives are the chapters of "General Advice" in "Garden-Making", also by Mr. Bailey. In these, there is sound counsel concerning the care and the handling of plants, counsel which makes the book valuable despite its antiquated theories of gardening. Brief directions as to "First Aid" may be found in Miss Shelton's chapter of "Don'ts" in "The Seasons in a Flower Garden", and in Mrs. Ely's chapter on "Fertilizers and Plant Remedies" in "The Practical Flower Garden". But unless the symptoms are obvious,—and even then,—it is wiser and more efficacious to "consult Bailey". Other books which deal adequately with sanitation and drainage, with all conditions necessary to public health, are Mr. Jenkins's "The Hardy Flower Book" where the stress is laid on preventative medicines, and Mr. Clutton-Brock's "Studies in Gardening" where the emphasis is placed rather on plant psychology and the adaptability of certain varieties to special surroundings.

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But fortunately gardening is not all a matter of immigration and hygiene. Those form but the sober preliminaries to gardening as a fine art, to questions where it is more a matter of cooperation, of improving upon suggestions, than of blindly following the lead. For the most part the gardener must be his own architect and must solve his problem from a knowledge of his own opportunities and limitations, profiting where he may by happy accidents and more often by his mistakes. Even such excellent charts as those worked out by Miss Shelton in "Continuous Bloom in America" seldom coincide with his needs and must be adapted in a manner more inspirational then it is literal. At the same time, written with a sound understanding of garden design and an eye keen for color arrangement, they give simple rules as the basis for all safe experiment. Much enlightenment may also be found, though it is apt to be lost at first in sheer delight at the reading, in Mr. Clutton-Brock's "Studies in Gardening", random essays which deal largely with the theory of design. Mr. Clutton-Brock is a believer in formal planning, but also in understanding on the part of the gardener of the limits of formality. "It is the business of formal gardening", he writes, "to make its own design and at the same time to obey the laws of its material—that is to use its material so that its characteristic beauty may be displayed to the best advantage." Suggestions as to how this may be accomplished will be found in the chapters "The Right Use of Annuals", "Common Sense in Gardening", "The Problem of the Herbaceous Border", "The House and Garden", and "Theories of Design".

But whenever my own enthusiasm is jaded and gardening seems a mere matter of muscle and of routine, there are two books to which I inevitably turn for stimulus. One is "The Well Considered Garden", by Mrs. Francis King. She is the garden "colorist", quick to discern and work out an effect of balanced beauty through harmony or through contrast. Even in writing of flowers and describing their tones, whether it be delicate buff, a vivid orange or a pale lavender, she has the light-hearted zest of the painter who takes joy in merely spreading his paint on the palette. And like many a modern artist she shows us that no color is really ugly, that even magenta phlox, the bane of the border, may be, if properly used, transformed to a thing of positive beauty. When, moreover, she writes of combinations dear to her heart—preferably of those softened by gray-blue, white, or lavender—her enthusiasm becomes infectious. Before I know it I have pencil and paper in hand and am working out a new plan, one in which there shall be no garish mistakes. Or I am out taking stock of my failures, pulling out here, replacing there, working with renewed eagerness as I make use of her suggestions. It is impossible to read her chapters on "Color Harmony", "Companion Crops", and "Balance in the Flower Garden" without a conviction of sin, or of attainment below one's best efforts. From her one learns to paint in bold strokes, in broad washes of color, with an eye trained not to meticulous detail, but to the general effect; an effect gained by harmonious groupings and masses.

Much the same may be said of Miss Jekyll, past mistress of gardening and author of many books of which the best is "Color Schemes in the Flower Garden". She, too, leads one to work with flowers as though with paints,

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and to feel that mere bloom is not enough if it be lacking in composition and arrangement. The tones she loves are more subdued than those preferred by Mrs. King, less gay, less daring, for she has a liking for mist-like effects and plants of silvery delicacy. But her manner is that of the artist, creating in a medium which is as beautiful as it is transient.

Neither of these two artists may we slavishly imitate. Copyists we could not be an we would. The individual surroundings and soil are stiff material for adaptation. And there is at best a world of difference between the work of genius and of craftsman. But whatever our opportunities, we may use these books as an inspiration, and learn from the examples they offer that discontent which is the first step to "gardening finely".

Continuous Bloom in America. By Louise Shelton. Charles Scribner's Sons.
The Practical Flower Garden. By Helena R. Ely. The Macmillan Co.
The Hardy Flower Book. By E. H. Jenkins. Charles Scribner's Sons.
Studies in Gardening. By A. Clutton-Brock. Charles Scribner's Sons.
Aristocrats of the Garden. By Ernest H. Wilson. Doubleday, Page and Co.
The Garden Blue Book. By Leicester B. Holland. Doubleday, Page and Co.
Hardy Plants for Cottage Gardens. By Helen R. Albee. Henry Holt and Co.
The Garden Month by Month. By M. S. Sedgwick. Frederick A. Stokes Co.
The Encyclopedia of Horticulture. By L. H. Bailey. The Macmillan Co.
Garden-Making. By L. H. Bailey. The Macmillan Co.
The Seasons in a Flower Garden. By Louise Shelton. Charles Scribner's Sons.
The Well Considered Garden. By Mrs. Francis King. Charles Scribner's Sons.
Color Schemes in the Flower Garden. By Gertrude Jekyll. Charles Scribner's Sons.

COMPLAINT DEPARTMENT

On Skipping

THE business of skipping everything we read has become so universal and unconscious that few of us have stopped to consider its possibilities, or the great benefits to be derived by reducing it to a scientific basis. It is a process largely acquired by our habit of reading the newspapers. The men who write the headlines make it so easy for us, that it is possible merely by turning over the pages and glancing at these headlines, to get what we believe is a fair idea of what is going on without reading anything in the pages. We assume, with bland confidence, that the men who make the headlines must themselves read the articles, and that if there is anything in them worth knowing, the headlines will convey it to us.

It is quite remarkable that this system has not yet been applied to books, but that is because, doubtless, we have been so busy with other matters that we haven't gotten around to it. The trouble with the average index is that it has no developed plot. And the men who get up tables of contents appear to be bent upon concealing from us what we really want to know. To do the thing properly of course, as it really ought to be done, they might have to read the books themselves. That is a great deal to ask of a man who gets up the contents and index. He is a busy man. He has his responsibilities. He ought not to be pushed too hard. Besides, if he did read the

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books and were able to make his contents and index as good as they ought to be, this would show in him powers and abilities that he could use to better advantage in other directions. He could probably make more at writing headlines.

It might be practical to get the gentlemen who write the headlines and "doormats" to work evenings on books, and to give them the space which the obliging author employs for "forewords", introductions, and prefaces. This would be a great saving. We should only have to read the first few pages of a book, embodied thus in appropriate headlines, to discourse about it even more intelligently than we do at present.

It would not do to trust the author with this job. In the first place, he knows too much about the book. It is a fair assumption that he has read it almost too closely. This is a great handicap, for he would be sure to be biased in his view and put in something not essential. We want a trained skipper—one who touches the book only on the high spots.

It should be understood that we are not looking exactly for a summary, because a summary is generally dull and lacks dramatic excellence. We want something which, in a few words, conveys the author's idea better than he himself has done it. "Hamlet" is considered by those who have taken the time and trouble to read it through, to be one of the best of Shakespeare's plays. It would be unfair to the more or less extinguished author to start off with:

Hamlet, a young prince of the house of Denmark, becomes very angry because his father-in-law has poured into his late father's ear something that caused his quietus. Hamlet resolves to get even, but puts off the fatal moment so long that he himself also dies. He is in love, by the way, with a handsome young woman named Ophelia.

This is all very well but—so to speak—it lacks pep. It doesn't get home to the reader. Something has got to be done to make the problem speak to all of us. We must be made to feel that it is a problem that really concerns us. It is only by making it a personal affair that we can get stirred up to any degree of literary curiosity or excitement; something like this:

WOULD YOU KILL YOUR FATHER-IN-LAW?

And At the Same Time Go Back On The Girl You Love?

Hamlet was confronted with this situation. He did not feel justified in waiting for the court to decide. Besides, his mother had married the man who killed his father too soon to make it entirely respectable, and Ophelia, his best girl, became mad by reciting too much modern poetry. Hamlet, therefore, kills everybody, including himself. It was a splendid thing for him to do, because it proves that living with your father-in-law under these circumstances may be easily more unendurable than death itself and fully as bad as living with your mother-in-law. He also stabbed Polonius, a fearful bore, thus establishing a useful precedent.

The object of skipping any book in these days is to be able to discuss it with anybody else and to convey the unmistakable impression that you have read it to the bone. Subjected to this test, it will easily be seen that you already know enough about Hamlet for the purpose. In fact, it gives you a much greater advantage than if you had neglected your business and golf and baseball and the "movies" to study it more carefully. For you can now be offhand and delightfully humorous.

In these favorable circumstances, you meet a clever lady whom, because you do not care to marry her, you wish to impress with your lofty intelligence. And she says:

"Don't you think 'Hamlet' is a wonderful psychological study?"

"Tremendous", you say, flecking the ashes from your cigarette. "But it is a great pity that Ophelia got going on

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free verse. Otherwise she might have died sane."

"Oh, you dreadful iconoclast", she exclaims, tapping you reproachfully with her fan. "Always making fun of the most sacred things. Will you never be serious?"

"I assure you I am serious", you say gravely. "And who would live with one's father-in-law when he hasn't money enough to support you in the manner to which you have been accustomed?" You remark this at a venture. It isn't in the headline, but you know you are safe. You can say almost anything when, with a slight basis of fact, you say it in that way. And your reputation for being a Shakespearian scholar and an acute literary critic is thereby established beyond peradventure—as Shakespeare might himself say.

A bond of sympathy is immediately established between you. She is flattered by the fact that you have considered her worthy of your confidence to the extent of being able to understand the depth of your real meaning, clothed as it were in your inimitable wit. And when she meets you again she says:

"You are such a deep student of Shakespeare, won't you really tell me sometime—in one of your sober moments—what you consider his real message to the world?" To which you retort suavely:

"Ah, my friend, life is indeed a solemn tangle—let us not be too serious, or we shall go mad—like poor Ophelia."

It may be argued that the author of a modern book, in his introduction, or the publisher in his description, gives enough of an idea of it, so that the reading is entirely unnecessary. The author for example, may begin with the startling and revolutionary words:

"In this book I have sought to convey—"

The only difficulty with this theory is that the author so rarely conveys what he thinks he is seeking to—and the publisher, knowing the genuine value of the book if he can only get it read, is rarely dishonorable enough, or unbusinesslike enough, to give away the whole plot in advance. Besides, it is not essential to know the real plot of a book in order to converse about it as if you had read it. If you want to know the plot of Hall Caine's books you have but to read the Bible, where he got them; and as many of us have read the Bible when very young, it is therefore not necessary to read Hall Caine's books at all. That is, unless you are reading for style; in which case you will of course read Hall Caine.

It is often best, however, not to know the plot. Mr. Galsworthy's "Saint's Progress" might be dealt with thus:

> If you love a girl and her back-number father objects, is it right to keep a war waiting just to get married? May you not do something else?
>
> N. B.
>
> Girl's name: Noel Pierson.
> Lover's name: Cyril Morland.

Armed with this fundamental information, you are approached once more by your literary lady. And she says:

"Don't you think 'Saint's Progress' is a wonderful study?"

"Ah, but," you soliloquize, flecking the ashes from your cigarette, "if you really want to get married properly, why not—I say *why not?*—keep a war waiting at least a couple of days?"

"You are quite impossible", she exclaims. "Will you never abandon your flippant manner? Don't you realize—?"

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You do realize. Being now an accomplished skipper of books, you know that you mustn't go too far. And so you say, again gravely:

"Ah, yes. You are right. But what, after all, is marriage? The old boundaries are being broken down. Galsworthy is only slightly in advance of his age. He has true vision. What will the future be? How can anyone forecast that? All I know is that there is something deeper than this false civilization—something hidden in our souls that—"

She clasps your hand.

"It is indeed so", she whispers, looking wistfully out of the ninth-story window toward Pittsburgh. "How well you voice it! How deep your insight! And Galsworthy! Is he not—wonderful?"

It is not improbable that there are many conscientious people who will dismiss this whole argument as being too flippant in itself, and unworthy of any genuine lover of literature. But it must be remembered that, as the late Grover Cleveland remarked, we are confronted by a condition and not a theory. It is obvious that we can read only a small portion of what is being written, no matter how good it is. We must abandon the whole business, thus sacrificing the society and esteem of all literary people, or we must acquire the art of skipping. And the question then becomes, Shall we learn this art ourselves as it ought to be learned or shall we wait for the labor-saving headlines to come along? Time presses. Ten books will come out next week which not to know about is to argue one's self unknown.

Take Job. We had thought that this unfortunate gentleman's status was fairly well established, that his standing as a character in fiction was fixed so that we should not have to bother about him any more. He has served us well as a kind of example in patience and discipline. He made a poor selection of friends and undoubtedly talked too much to the neighbors about his symptoms and personal troubles. And yet, until the income tax and Bolshevism came along and the price of clothes got so high that it was no object for a modest and God-fearing man to wear them any more, we were inclined to sympathize with Job. But now is H. G. Wells, who writes about Job; and in order to keep up with the literary times we must know what Mr. Wells thinks, or we shall be termed that ignominious thing, a lowbrow. This is also true of J. D. Beresford. We had supposed that the general object that people had in mind in getting married, in view of the high rents, was to save as much floor space as possible; yet in "God's Counterpoint" Mr. Beresford has his couple, on their honeymoon, hire no end of separate apartments, apparently regardless of expense, and all because the alleged hero's father refused to read *risqué* books in his early youth. It is not my intention to discuss matters of sex. I am no Robert Chambers in disguise, and I understand from members of my immediate family that the ground has already been covered by many painstaking and conscientious people who believe that writing literature is above any money consideration. But you cannot possibly discuss the subject of Platonic matrimonial friendship—assuming there is such a thing—with any Vassar graduate unless you have read, or know something about, Mr. Beresford's book.

We must, therefore, learn how to skip if we wish to achieve the reputation of being even semi-intelligent. And being semi-intelligent is almost a

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necessity—unless you live in New York.

The worst of it is that what you may need to know about a book may not be at its end, but concealed somewhere inside of it, in a pocket, as it were. This means sharp looking, a sort of instinct acquired only by practice.

Macaulay used to do it by running his eye over the opening of each paragraph. He could usually track the essential thing to its lair in a short time. His wonderful memory was a great help. I am aware that memories are going out. But you can get one for five dollars at any correspondence school.

In addition to novels, however, there are other kinds of books which it appears necessary to skip in order to appear as if you knew something. No one ought, certainly in these times, to appear not to know something about the League of Nations. A year or so ago a brief skipping of the Constitution of the United States might have answered for this purpose. But in the best literary—and I believe also in the best political—circles, the Constitution is no longer *en règle*. It is therefore essential that we should do some skipping of the writings of modern historians. You will discover that your ignorance of the present League—an ignorance that you share with most good Americans—depends upon how little you know of former leagues. But after you have judiciously skipped Stephen Pierce Duggan's book ("The League of Nations. The Principle and Practice"), you will be entirely safe in meeting your literary lady. She will begin by saying:

"Don't you think the League of Nations is a wonderful psychological study?"

"Poor old Metternich", you will reply, somewhat absently flecking the ashes from your cigarette, "he little knew—"

She will press you for a more definite reply.

"Knew what?" she will ask, with the devotional aspect of one who seeks wisdom at its very fountainhead. And you will then realize your responsibility. This is no time for cheap cynicism, or brilliant persiflage. You must get down to business.

"He little knew", you will go on, "the basic principles of self-determination. Much as we revere the Greeks, we have come to realize that, with the possible exception of Plato, they were alas! but hopeless seekers after the light. And Rome! What is Rome now? The Holy Roman Empire has been dissolved. Do you realize that? Nothing but Shantung remains."

You will say this after a considerable pause, with deep feeling.

"It is as you say", she will remark. "Ah, my friend, if I did not feel that there were still minds like yours to grapple with these international problems, I should despair of my country."

You will then lay your hand upon her arm; not in the Robert Chambers or John Galsworthy or J. D. Beresford, or even the H. G. Wells or Hall Caine manner, but more as William Howard Taft or Robert Lansing would do it.

"We must work together, we men and women of the higher mood, for the ultimate betterment of humanity, must we not?" you will whisper, discreetly.

And, as Hamlet remarks—at least so I am told by an invaluable friend of mine named Bartlett—"so runs the world away."

—THOMAS L. MASSON

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How to Entertain An Author

ENTERTAINING an author is so highly specialized a form of etiquette, one so different from what the ordinary run of people consider it and so requisite in these days of universal authorship, that a new chapter must be added to the code.

Time was when authors were few and far between; today the census lists 166,947 of them, which, being divided among our population, means about 1,438 authors to every million of men, women and children in these United States, including the Philippines and Hawaii. Of course, when we assume the mandatory over Turkey, Armenia, Ireland, and the Jewish pale, this percentage will be slightly lowered. However, there are enough of them within the bounds of the United States to make quite a showing, and, as the open season for authors fast approaches, these lines are written to guide those intending to flirt around the fringe of the life literary.

The etiquette divides itself into two distinct parts: (1) how to cultivate an author; (2) what to do with him after you get him.

You can meet an author in the ordinary way by having a friend who is on the inside of the literary ring arrange for you to buy a luncheon for them both at some expensive restaurant. Or you can—this is the more subtle way—drop him a note via his publishers. The note should run somewhat in this fashion:

My dear Mr. Hexler Jones:

I am presuming to write you because for the past few days I have been fervidly absorbed by your latest novel "Candytufts". What an inspiration must have been given you to write so remarkable a cross-section of our modern life!... However, there is one point that bothers me—I do not understand why, after Plashers has struck his wife with the empty milk bottle on page 249, and has wiped the blood from his hands, he mutters, "There, that is done, at last!" Don't you think the mere act of striking would produce sufficient satisfaction? And doesn't this remark slightly lower the tone of what he has done?

I did not mean to bother you, but this thought has haunted me for days and I was simply forced to appeal to you for an explanation.

LILY LOUISE SOUDER

P. S.—Do you ever tea?

Now it may be that this note will never reach the author. Publishers vie with Mr. Burleson in preventing the delivery of mail. If you call up a publisher's office and ask for an author's address, they will summarily refuse to furnish it. However, should the publisher be considerate enough to forward your letter, you will doubtless receive a reply.

If the author has published only one book he will answer immediately, accepting your invitation to tea; if he is an established author it will require quite a lot more correspondence to bring him around. Established authors are usually busy men who run a literary shop as a side line to practising law, medicine, or sales managing; consequently their off-hours are at a premium.

Never make the mistake of merely saying that you have read his book; always pick out an obscure passage about three-quarters through and ask him about it. This proves that you have read his book and are genuinely interested in it. You may not know it—and in saying this I reveal a great literary secret—but authors deliberately put these obscure passages in their books in order to arouse controversy, hoping, of course, that the controversy will lead to an invitation. The established author, I might add, can never be attracted by a mere invitation to tea. In writing him always

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say: "P. S. Do you ever dine out?"

In the entertainment of authors society is divided into two opposite camps: those who treat an author as an author and those who treat him as a human being. I have always considered it questionable to treat an author as an author. Like a great many humans he dislikes having his business cast in his teeth. You don't ask the minister when he comes to tea how soul-saving is getting along. You never dream of asking a lawyer if he is writing any more of those jolly little briefs, or consult the plumber on the progress of sinks. Why then should an author be publicly reminded of the fact that he is an author? Imagine smacking the author on the back and bellowing heartily, "Well, how does the Underwood run these days?" Besides, he may use a Corona, and you'd have made a terrible faux pas! For authors are known by the typewriters they use.

No, treat the author as a human being. When he enters the room introduce him as Mr. Hexler Jones and don't let your guests make catty comments on his old-style dinner jacket. Offer him the same sort of drinks you offer the others and give him the same sort of food. There are exceptions, of course. One evening I was entertaining an author who writes for over a million a week and passed him the usual sherry and bitters, whereupon he remarked audibly: "I don't want that rot-gut, give me whiskey." His wife later explained that he had just been obliged to sell a short story for much under his usual price of a thousand dollars, so the incident was forgotten.

During the course of the dinner—perhaps during salad and after you have said what you think of the present administration — you might casually mention Mr. Hexler Jones's latest book. By speaking then, you have allowed him a period in which to enjoy the bulk of the dinner. Had you brought up the subject with the hors d'oeuvres, the poor man would have missed most of the dinner as he would have been talking. During the salad, then, is the reasonable time. From that point on you and your guests can enjoy the monologue.

It has been found that having an author in is a much cheaper form of evening amusement than paying Caruso for a few songs, or hiring Tony Sarg's marionettes.

When the author has apparently exhausted what he has to say about himself, have your husband or some other male take him discreetly into the library and ply him with liquor and cigars. On the library table have his books casually displayed. A great many hostesses make the mistake of displaying his books in the beginning of the evening. This is fatal. If the author sees his books when he first enters he is thereupon satisfied and will refuse to perform; but if you withhold them from him the absence will have the same effect as hot irons do on trained seals.

The other form of entertainment—treating him as an author—requires an entirely different setting. It should be a tête-à-tête and, presuming you are a woman, you should assume the rôle of Cleopatra or Theda Bara. Shaded candles, tuberoses on the mantel, a disappearing maid, expensive Egyptian cigarettes, and the best silver service set up in a corner of the library are the requisite properties for entertaining an author as an author in your home. Make a pretense of pouring tea and then hand him the carafe of Scotch and the cigarette box. Confine your conversation to Bolshev-

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ism and its little offspring, Sex. Perhaps, if the repartee waxes too heady, you might dilute it with a few drops of New Thought or some other religious cordial.

This may seem indiscreet but the author will appreciate it. Most authors are married and have children. They stoke the furnace and do the marketing and wait on their wives and lead a very humdrum life. In their heart of hearts they long to be the sort of men they write about. The setting I have suggested gives them all the thrills of experience without the headache of alimony.

There is just one more word to say —that is, on entertaining foreign authors. From all accounts it looks as though we would continue to have a flood of English authors in America this year. Taxes and living are high abroad, and even Mr. Shaw is said to be yielding to the temptation of our lecture receipts, although he has stoutly refused to consider this country as anything but a mental doormat. We will have war poets and military authors and radical writers of the better class coming over in droves. Consequently, the socially elect should learn now the art of entertaining these imported writers.

The first thing to remember is that all authors from countries other than the United States are invariably great authors and should be treated as such. In their omniscience they will criticize our customs and our country. Always agree with them. We are a very young nation and have a lot to learn. In entertaining them, accommodate yourself to their peculiar manner of living. Foreign authors always have temperament. Somehow, American authors can't get away with temperament. Finally, remember that they are here for business and their time with us is short. In selecting your company, therefore, choose only those who can assist in the propaganda. Insist that your social secretary put an account of the dinner party in all the society columns. And put every facility, such as motor-cars, club credit, the run of the house, and the eligible débutantes, at their command. Foreign authors are accustomed to having these little comforts at home and we should not deny them here.

—RICHARDSON WRIGHT

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A NOTE UPON STYLE

BY FREDERICK NIVEN

A NOTE upon style, or technique, may not interest the average reader; but it should interest the writer unless his private opinion of his readers be: "Anything will do for them. They cannot tell a Shepherd's Bush White City from a city of marble", and unless his aim be the emoluments accruing from mere circulating-library box-filling.

Yet in this matter of style it is better to be a reader who knows nothing of it, who has never heard the word, than one to whom it is synonymous with the saying of *prunes and prisms*. "The schoolmaster has inevitably come to be the arbiter of what shall or shall not be read," wrote Mr. Gosse, in a recent essay, protesting with his wonted suavity against the fact. The average exponent is omniscient—he knows; the average practitioner goes humbly—he is always learning. Mr. Gosse's "schoolmaster" would advise a Hardy to study a Sully, instead of a Sully to study a Hardy. Practitioners are better guides than exponents. It was the practitioners and the lovers of literature who discovered Joseph Conrad. They discovered him when he wrote "Youth" and "Typhoon". Now the erudite are willing to name him, carefully—and they praise his "Victory" and his "Arrow of Gold" when they receive these for review, telling us that at last Conrad has done big things!

But the craftsman must be sincere. As in the art of painting we find those who cannot draw filling frames, and preaching a new gospel of paint to cover their deficiencies, so do we find authors ready to fill the covers of a book though they have never heard of philology, though the history of a word is of no account to them, and even the laws of grammar are for them made but to be ignored. Should the "schoolmaster" rise up and speak vehemently to such, I am with him. There should be for all writers something sacerdotal, in the finest sense, in the craft of words. It has survived the menace that blighted other crafts with the passing of the guilds. Love and pride in it may continue even in these days when, in other activities, love and pride cannot be expected, and a man spends all his life punching out (let us say) the holes in a hinge by the aid of a machine. It is in vain for that man to rise to the heights of wishing he could make them better. He cannot even fall to the depths of saying: "That will do." The possibility of love and pride is taken out of his life.

"That will do" may serve as a motto for the mere box-fillers above mentioned who, gushing of simple human emotions, have secret contempt for the tastes of the simple human beings for whom they cater. But there are innumerable practitioners of the art of

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words to whom that art is of more value even than their own comfort. If they rise up at any moment and vehemently decry the merits of some nominal fellow-craftsman, the implication of jealousy may well be unfounded. They may be rather as members of a guild decrying what they consider meritricious. The more an artist is devoted to his art, the less he is moved by jealousy, the more ready is he to extol a thing well done, even though Destiny may not have granted it to him to be the doer. On the style, or the technique of the writing craft, much has been written, but too much can never be written to fail to interest these—even if to influence negatively!

There is one view of the word *style* —"the style is the man"—according to which all written matter is stylistic. In that sense a letter written from Bedlam is redolent of style. The style is the man—and the style is also the madman. Thus the letter in which we read: "i am wiling to come to you as cook tempy or peramint", and Milton's "Areopagitica" are examples of style.

One hears it said that "no amount of polishing can improve a first draft." One does also often hear it said: "If only I had the time to polish I could be a great writer." Both of these speeches are somewhat misleading, and the latter is not (from one point of view) without pathos. Let us glance at both sides of the question. I recently met, by a whimsical coincidence, one man after another, all preaching the same gospel, with varying expressions. One announced: "The great writers never bothered about style!" Another said: "Plato, Homer, Shakespeare, Milton just wrote as it came." The third declared: "All this searching for the right word, à la Flaubert, is absurd. The masters just coughed it up." I listened to them as I listen to all, and considered how they had Cobbett on their side, who said: "Never think of mending what you write: let it go: no patching." But happening upon Buxton Forman's Keats I wondered if my informants (and Cobbett) had the truth of the matter for all—noting how slowly, with the changing of a word, the changing of another word, by a series of obvious communings and rejections, many immortal lines had been achieved. I mentioned the subject, which was then engrossing my thoughts, to my friend Professor Hudson-Williams (known outside scholastic circles chiefly for his edition of the Elegiacs of Theognis), he being a "schoolmaster" of the exceptional type, a type different from that gently, but surely rightly, pilloried by Mr. Gosse.

"Plato!" he cried out as I quoted the assertion in which that name had been cited; and turning to his shelves he produced an annotated Plato which he laid before me. There again was evidence against the contention of these gentlemen, ample evidence of Plato's dissatisfaction with many a first draft, with the second attempt, even with the third; and that his ultimate words far exceeded in merit the first there could be no doubt. I have here no axe to grind. I am merely trying to hold the balances. Assuredly I do not mean to say that by rewriting can literature be attained.

Many writers, white-hot with an idea, can scarce make their pens rush over the paper fast enough to capture it. On rereading what they have written they often discover that the capture is in doubt. There are many gaps in the mesh. The balances swing again and we withhold our show of

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hands from the exponents of "coughing it up". Sentence after sentence obviously does not express what the author meant. Were he to print that draft as it stood, we would arrive at his meaning instead of having the meaning brought to us.

Here we come to another point. There are those to whom the style that is easy is suspect of being the vehicle of a trite thought; they do not do their author the credit of having taken the trouble to express himself lucidly. Likewise there are those who look upon a tortured delivery as evidence of a profundity of wisdom; not realizing that the deep thought is their own while trying to discover the thought (probably trifling) that their author is unable to express lucidly. It is a stage in these notes where must be quoted and considered: "Easy writing makes damned hard reading" —a dictum which clashes with Cobbett's. A reputation for profound mentality may be made by reason of linguistic laziness, and a trifling writer may be hailed, even by the critics, dazzled a moment, as a "great stylist" —his tinsel taken for gold—in the same way as many a woman has been called beautiful by reason of her knack with rouge and rice powder. But a cosmetic is not a preservative.

It may seem that I write too much of the expression and too little of the thought expressed, but space has to be considered. I must interject, however, that I was greatly with Haldane MacFall in a protest he made to the press a few years ago against a phrase by Thomas Seccombe. Mr. Seccombe had somehow succumbed to a malady common to the yellow-press, the malady of superlatives, and had declared that someone was "the greatest prose writer" of the time. Mr. MacFall replied that he was weary of hearing of these "greatest"; within a few days he had read of more than one "greatest prose writer of the time", and as for Mr. Seccombe's "greatest" he contended that he could not be, having written no really great book. The greatest prose writer, Mr. MacFall remarked, must be the writer of the greatest work in prose. It was a protest, from one entirely alive to the excellencies of diction, against two menaces: against the menace of esteeming deportment more than character, and against the air of omniscience. Each of us has a view on who is the "greatest"—so far as we know books, that is; for myself I am ignorant of Eskimo poems and of every single volume in the libraries of the scholarly book-collecting traders of Jenne, of whom we read in M. Dubois's book; but to each of us the greatest book must have thought and manner in perfect poise.

When words are considered beyond what they have to express, we have preciosity. When the high traditions of our language are ignored, and the capacity for taking pains, we get what Stevenson called (seeing as imminent) "the slap-dash and the disorderly". Mention of Stevenson recalls a letter he wrote to Henry James: "May I beg you, the next time 'Roderick' [Hudson] is printed off, to go over the sheets of the last few chapters, and strike out 'immense' and 'tremendous'. You have simply dropped them there like your pocket-handkerchief; all you have to do is to pick them up and pouch them, and your room—what do I say?—your cathedral!—will be swept and garnished." It is a word of advice that most authors must everlastingly be giving to themselves. It is a painful subject, for no writer can note such flaws in books for which he cares without a sense of horror, wondering what is his own dropped handkerchief.

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Sir Walter Raleigh (of the nineteenth, not the seventeenth century) speaks of Chaucer as being "unable in prose to save his ear from obsession by the cadences of the pulpit". Not carping at this pronouncement, but using it to lead me on to a brief mention of the voice in literature, it has to be said that these "cadences of the pulpit" have helped to give splendor to English and have taught us to bring the voice upon the printed page. In that celebrated passage by Sir Walter Raleigh (of the seventeenth, not the nineteenth century) upon the stars, we are most moved when, coming to a consideration of plants and herbs, he breaks out: "... for as these were not created to beautify the earth alone, and to cover and shadow her dusty face...." It is a voice! The dead man's voice is in our ears. Such clerics as Jeremy Taylor and John Donne well repay the study of those who would carry on something of the best tradition of English literature in a jerky age. The clerics had a care for subject, predicate, object, and extension.

Whether we decide to serve under the banner of those who (like Cobbett) advise against revision, or of those who (I think I am safe in saying like Shakespeare, from much intrinsic evidence, and can certainly say like Keats, from the evidence I have here given) were not always content with the first phrase that came, must depend on our phrases! There is no one rule of procedure for all. There is hardly a rule of procedure for any single writer, because of the ebb and flow of nerve tides, and the varying mental fitness. The great secret is love of the craft and reverence for our mother-tongue.

THE LATIN TONGUE

BY JAMES J. DALY

Like a loud-booming bell shaking its tower
Of granite blocks, the antique Latin tongue
Shook the whole earth: over all seas it flung
Triremes of war, and bade grim legions scour
The world's far verges. Its imperial dower
Made Tullius a god: and Flaccus strung
Its phrases into garlands; while among
The high enchanters it gave Maro power.

Then Latin lost its purple pomp of war,
Its wine-veined laughter and patrician tears:
It cast its fleshly grossness, won a soul,
And trafficked far beyond the farthest star
With angel-cohorts, echoing through the years
In sacred Embassies from pole to pole.

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THE HOUNDS OF SPRING FICTION

BY RUTH MURRAY UNDERHILL

NOW is the winter of our discontent
Made glorious summer by this sun of" guaranteed, bombproof non-war fiction. Of course we have no right to it. The world is, apparently, entering on a prolonged series of blizzards; the lessons of the past five years stand out gaunt and leafless—the leaves having been those of propaganda literature—but we insist on spring. And the keepers of the secret of what the public wants have produced it. Not even in the last chapter does the trump sound and do the characters leave their soul crises in mid air to scatter, with uplifted faces, toward canteens and trenches. The year 1914 is skirted with all the prudence accorded to the Victorian unmentionables.

From the author's point of view, this scrapping of a perfectly good *deus ex machina* is a sad injustice. The grim fact is well known that there are only a dozen or so plots in all the world. And think how each of these can be refurbished—as the simple-hearted trim an old frock with red ribbons—by letting loose the dogs of war at the climax!

Since that high-class English expedient, death on the hunting field, has fallen into disuse, it has been practically impossible to kill off anybody in a novel. People had to keep on living together as they do in real life and the result was, as in real life, a most smothering amount of talk. But in a war novel, if there were not at least two or three deaths, the reader wanted to know the reason why. Unwelcome relatives and extra members of the triangle vanished like magic, the air raids and the flu providing even for ladies. As for regeneration, that painful and wordy process happened in a flash and one glimpse of the Glory of the Trenches made the most hopeless failure a fit mate for the heroine.

War is like virtue. It brings a favorable result or two—*if* you wait long enough. Our present period of catching our breath after the struggle probably counts with the gods as something like the first quarter-minute, so we need hardly expect the promised widening of the intellectual horizon to begin just yet. Possibly it, like democracy, is coming in its own time and in ways we little expect. But something is happening in the field of fiction this spring, some real stir and change. Possibly—one says it with caution—we are thinking a little more. Not about Bolshevism, not about the democratic system: the shadow of those enormous things is still flung so high and wide that only made-to-order propaganda on one side or the other dare leap toward it. No, we are thinking about something more fundamental. What are people really like:

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the individual people, who have been fighting, who are now struggling, who must, sometime, build up a new world?

Realism has not been very popular in America. In accordance with our national optimism, we have preferred rather to read about what we would like to be than about what we are. There are two national characteristics concerned in this: Puritanism and youth. Odd as it may sound, the flimsiest happy-ending love story in a cheap magazine caters to Puritanism, because it is expected to be read, not only for pleasure but for the moral effect. The reader, after having seen the poor young clerk rise to be president of the company, will feel his own chances better and will go forth heartened up, as did his forefathers after a sermon.

And we will *not* take our fiction impersonally. This is where youth comes in. If we were only Puritans, stories of hell fire (i. e. business failure) and terrible examples, might be allowed. But youth is interested in nothing but itself. The hero must not be some other fellow, unlike the reader in every respect, he must be the reader. That is, an ordinary young man—or woman—not exactly handsome, but with great possibilities. The older countries have laughed at us for this: they who had stomachs for suicide and loneliness and all the myriad types of unsuccess which Nature permits. But, to us, such things were not merely a part of the truth: they were an outrage against our own hopes, our own childlike faith in the pleasantness of things.

War, unfortunately, is bad for such faith. Yet people came home from the war smiling: most people, in fact. The usual effect on the doughboy was that state of cheerful disillusion denominated "hardboiled". "We've been through that," grinned they who had once been boys. "I guess we can stand anything." Think of the liberating result on literature! When every sort of life, no matter how obscure, may be classed as an interesting item in a world where we are trying to live with open eyes, the "unwholesomeness" of realism is gone. The people pictured are not necessarily ourselves, but they are our brothers. And the more we know about them, the better we shall build a new world.

This is not to say that the spring fiction is an orgy of suicide and failure. Those things enter not at all. The typical story is the novel of success: but success not of the spectacular, fairy-tale variety, such as all of us know we shall never achieve except in dreams. These are humble successes, successes of a niche in the world found, a duty done. Of course there are novels of adventure, which are to be assumed in every issue of fiction as bread at a meal. But, if one were to sort some fifty of the new books into piles, the adventure pile would not, as just after the war, be the highest. The highest would contain the homely annals of "just folks".

Possibly as a corollary to this, very few stories of the fifty which came under the writer's eye, were set in New York. For the story about real things, we want the small town, the town where people live in wooden houses and know their neighbors. The traditional Wall Street man with his frivolous wife, has faded away, to give place to the butcher, the baker, and the real estate man of the South and the West and the Middle West.

That makes for differentiation among the heroes and heroines. They are not all young, nor well dressed. Miss Zona Gale, in "Miss Lulu Bett" introduces an old maid who is not an

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old maid, but a woman; Lightnin' in the book of that name and Caleb Cotton in "Fireweed", are heroes neither young nor well groomed; "Invincible Minnie" enacts her rôle on those ragged borders of the middle class where fiction seldom wanders. Almost all the novels, as a matter of fact, dip back and forth between the backwoods, the slums, and the parlor. Almost nowhere is there a set of prosperous, homogeneous people, except where Claude Washburn introduces dynamite under their chairs in "Order".

Optimism need not suffer from these stories. They are suffused with a sense of the richness of everyday life, its peculiar, kindly aroma. In fact, one might almost feel that Puritanism, driven from its praiseworthy desire to preach success, has taken refuge in the higher and more impregnable position of preaching goodness. The stories are full of unselfishness and steadfast courage. Life is recognized to be a fight against continuous small obstacles, where the victory is not to beauty and dash, but to serenity and courage. "Fireweed" and "The Rose of Jericho" are studies in character—not perfect on first view, but, in these things, royal.

One feared it would be a long time, after our debauch of German spies and submarines, before we should see again the story whose whole adventure consisted in a man's finding himself. Yet, during the war, we became unusually outspoken about moral things. Finding one's self was a reality, promised on enlistment platforms and alluded to in War Savings booths. After all, there is no other plot. What more absorbing, more adventurous, and more sure of a happy ending, than the discovery of what one wants and how to get it? War gave us a taste for that plot, whose progress is independent of peace treaties: these novels give us its expression.

I have said these stories strike me as particularly moral. But they show a surprising lack of excitement about conventional morals. Unmarried motherhood does not cause a shudder; divorce, in two of the novels, makes a blameless entry. The heroine considers living, and sometimes does live, with a man to whom she is not married—but she remains the heroine. Almost nobody lives a Victorian life unspotted by Bohemia. The authors are not truculent about this and manifest no urge to shock us. Simply, their emphasis is not on conventions, but on people—the upright, sincere individuals who mean well by the world and on whom its new structure must rest.

There are several American novels which bring out this point of view, but the most really unfettered stride is taken by Jane Mander of New Zealand. Let America withdraw any conceit about being the newest and youngest of the countries! The writer remembers, when overseas, being set ingenuously in her place by an Australian officer, who explained that he liked the people from the States all right, but found them lacking in hustle and slow to see a joke. Slow also, in the light of this novel, in emerging from the shadow of tradition. Hail to the new world, where monogamy is alluded to as "the prehistoric side of the marriage contract" (inaccurate, like so many inspiring things); where, when a married woman and her lover have been sternly virtuous for ten years, the husband expresses irritated amazement, and they are obliged to conclude "there is an awful lot of good virtue gone to waste somewhere".

This novel, one notes, is by a woman,

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and that brings us to another interesting feature of the spring novels. Almost all the serious ones, at least in America, are by women. During the war, we understood, the sex was reduced to its mediæval status. Tweed uniforms and heavy boots notwithstanding, the ministering angel and she who was best qualified to keep the home fires burning, were the types preferred. Perhaps this jogged the militants to even deeper class consciousness; perhaps the men were all busy at something else and women were the only people with time to think. Certainly they have thought and thought, according to this spring's output, far more than the men. The latter, with the brilliant exception of Claude Washburn, are still ingenuously yarning about "valiant deeds centring around a woman's whim" and "love stories as sweet and wayward as the heroine herself", unaware that whims and waywardness have passed out of feminine fashion.

"That singular phenomenon, the lady novelist", at whom W. S. Gilbert cast the only one of his jibes I do not love, is now plural. But she has a chance to be—let us save ourselves from Shakespearian conceit and say, not singular but—unusual. In fact, an unprecedented chance! When Romain Rolland described the women authors who bored Jean Christophe in "The Market Place", he said something like this: "Women have a real contribution to make, if they would stop describing life from the conventional man's viewpoint, and tell us how they really feel as women".

Some years ago they began. Not, I mean, as single spies, like Marie Bashkirtseff, but in battalions, whose officers were May Sinclair, Ethel Sidgwick, and Dorothy Richardson. These pioneers were, as is the rule, English, but now, one by one, the American women are rising up to tell us how the heroine really felt when she turned her pure profile and sat so silent.

Ye gods—or ye goddesses—what a revelation! Very often, with a man's soul in the balance, she was thinking about the dinner menu. Or she was planning how to foil some dodge of her mother who, the cat, was after the same man. Or she was day dreaming about the peevish lame fellow with the queer ideas who is the pathetic sort women really like.

The public is understood to want something new and the obliging male author, having ransacked the wild West, the South Seas, and the New York boarding house, was skirting the sex taboo with an adventurous eye. But the woman author, without even alluding to illegitimate children or peeping behind the rows of asterisks, can shock society to its foundations. She can, like May Sinclair, rend the veil from the arcadian home life of sisters, and show them in internecine warfare over every approaching male. Like Dorothy Richardson, she can destroy that sacred fetish the "wayward charm" and reveal young female hobbledehoys as callow as any youth. Worst and most unspeakable, women are the only people alive who do not bow abashed heads at the name of "mother machree". They are capable of dashing from its shrine that sacred white-haired figure, and substituting a nervous sort of person who practises self-denial as an indoor sport, to the inconvenience of every one.

"It isn't so," the editors, men all, have been objecting. "These people aren't real!" Especially—heaven save the mark—these men! The men in a typical woman's novel are, one must admit, a hard dose. But after centuries of the fluffy haired heroines

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who, as one of the critics recently put it, "keep a plot alive by their heroic and unremitting idiocy", why not, for a change, the "dear of a man" who is a ne'er-do-weel, or an invalid, or one of those poetic types that have to be taken care of?

Watch the women authors and see if he is not the man. I will grant that Stephen O'Valley, in "The Gorgeous Girl", is "as proper a man as" could have been created by Holworthy Hall. But look at Jim, in "This Marrying", and the sweet old soul in "Fireweed", and the intellectual cad of "The Rose of Jericho" and last and most appalling, the poor devil who fell into the clutches of "Invincible Minnie". Heroes? Those! The men that women love.

Those who can stomach revelation must pause over "Invincible Minnie" —novel by, of, and for woman, the last because few "right minded" males could endure it. It may be that the militants have an animus. They would have a right to it, after being stuffed, by virtue of their sex, into a class which does not describe them—nor, they claim, the majority of their fellow women. But could any one actuated only by a spirit of genial investigation perpetrate the cruel and unbelievable exposure of Minnie, the truly feminine! Crash go the ideals. Better a hundred Scenes of Sin than the revelation that dowdy little Minnie, small and confiding, desiring only to cook for a husband and wash for babies,—

Hath really neither love nor hope nor light
Nor certitude nor peace nor help for pain,—

but is a primitive survival, animated by a blindly destructive instinct and better exterminated.

Ah well, after Minnie, there is romance—though I think there would be more elfin delight in taking them in the opposite order. I suppose that some day we shall swing back to romance as the world has swung before. Romance that has nothing to do with humble folk and soul finding, romance which deals not with homely difficulties but with obstacles magically terrible and heroes magically brave. And so that it may be ready to shine out when we want it, the light of romance never quite dies. Two or three of the books this spring concern that child of the fairies who rises from obscurity to all the glory of wealth and genius, even as you and I—would like to do.

The most essentially romantic happen to be English. "The Rose of Jericho" has the romantic seal upon it, but that disregards the conventions, and your real romance goes clothed in the conventions as a knight in his glittering armor. Imagine fighting with your fists, or without a waving plume! Sunny Ducrow, in the book called after her, and Sally Tennant in "The Hermit of Far End", are your real heroines of romance, who feel all the inhibitions that a nice lady ought to feel, thus removing cause for argument on the part of the author and leaving the stage free for impassioned action.

How loyally we return to romance, just as the East Side Italian audience will watch the knights of Charlemagne slay Paynim after Paynim with three thrusts and a flop, three hundred and sixty-four nights of the year! We all know its language, just as, I suppose, in the Middle Ages, people recognized the sound of Latin. We know we do not speak that language in our daily lives. Some of its most cherished expressions, such as the sense of honor whose protection keeps people as busy as earning a living, we regard as lacking in common sense. Yet New York flocked to "Dé-

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classée" and felt as familiar with its assumptions as did Athenian audiences with the Furies whom no one of them had ever seen.

"The Hermit of Far End" is bona fide romance. The strong man suffers in silence for another's sin; the high-strung girl burns herself out because she is of those who bend but do not break; the horrible misunderstanding menaces the lives of people bound in honor. I never saw one of these people, I never hope to see one, but, unlike the author of "The Purple Cow", I cannot aver that I would rather see than be one. If there is to be any such person around, I insist on being the one, for all onlookers are due to be made thoroughly miserable. It is misery that even the most confirmed "cheerful story" fan easily forgives. Too old is the quaintly cut panoply of romance and too innocently loved, to be yet utterly cast aside for common sense and psychoanalysis.

Beyond romance, there is, this spring, an unusual ebullition of the fanciful, even the farcical. This is another result of the war, under whose grim weight matter that we used to consider silly became a necessary tonic. There are several volumes, sketchily poetic, about the sort of people who live with the elves, touching life lightly, finding their wayward delight in clouds and trees and in kindly laughter at human perplexities. "Living Alone", though with a background of sinister realism, is such a book; "Celia" is a combination of elfishness and sermon; "The Pagan" and "The London Venture" tread with welcome lightness.

Sometimes the laughter swells to a broad guffaw. After all, if we are going to talk about Bolshevism and labor troubles, your motley's your only wear. Wallace Irwin has had his laugh, to order, we suspect, at those mythical super-idiots, the parlor Reds. George Agnew Chamberlain and André Maurois have made life look quaint in spite of war.

When we have exhausted thus some two-thirds of the season's flowerings, there remains always adventure. Adventure in the wild West, in the South Seas, on the Mississippi, among the ancient castles of Europe, even during the Napoleonic wars and among the splendors of ancient Egypt. Detecting is not being done at home this spring. Passports being once more available, it has gone voyaging. I like the idea of combining the detective story and the travel story, as the head of Oliver Twist's institution combined the hot and cold porridge, "in one bountiful dish". People trail each other, in the latest tales, all over the known countries of the globe, the nearest they come to the old known haunts being Gans Street, Jersey City.

Adventure in business is another field thrillingly but not extensively represented. Business adventure, these days, is too likely to lead to a tragic discussion of wages and profit sharing, leaving love and murder to wait their cues in vain. And, if you don't know which side is right, how can you tell where to put your hero? But the stories of a railroad given, with up-to-date ethics, into the hands of the local inhabitants, and of the foiling of Florida land grabbers, have the old pioneer tang.

There are a few books from the other side of the ocean, more serious in tone than the majority of our own. "Benjy" is not too serious. In "Benjy", the current of an English family life flows by for two generations like a quiet, familiar river. It has no rapids, only a continual variety of ripples and floating sticks and un-

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expected little whirlpools, each one, sad or gay, effaced smoothly by the next. When the stage is set in the way that all good fiction readers know to indicate tragedy, nothing happens, and, again, out of a mild spring sky, some sad and irrevocable event turns the current of a life in the silent, inconsequential way that we know for truth. Sweet reality is here. There is more pleasant reading in "Mount Music", an Irish story, charming and wise and hard to classify because it is such a real book.

There is another book from the "Maupassant of the north"—"Treacherous Ground", by Johan Bojer. It is a striking book, though it deals with that continental type which is least sympathetic to Americans, the weary and disillusioned person, and with that form of expression for which the American mind affords least standing room, the parable. Its trenchant clearness is almost frightening, like transparent glass where one expected wooden walls; its teaching is both true and tragic. Doubtless we shall comfort ourselves by deciding that its hero of the liquid name has no parallel in this country—except among our opponents.

Miss Lulu Bett. By Zona Gale. D. Appleton and Co.

Lightnin'. By Frank Bacon. Harper and Bros.

Fireweed. By Joslyn Gray. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Invincible Minnie. By Elisabeth Sanxay Holding. George H. Doran Company.

Order. By Claude Washburn. Duffield and Co.

The Rose of Jericho. By Ruth Boucicault. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

The Story of a New Zealand River. By Jane Mander. John Lane Co.

The Gorgeous Girl. By Nalbro Bartley. Doubleday, Page and Co.

This Marrying. By Margaret Culkin Banning. George H. Doran Company.

Sunny Ducrow. By Henry St. John Cooper. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

The Hermit of Far End. By Margaret Pedler. George H. Doran Company.

Living Alone. By Stella Benson. The Macmillan Co.

Celia Once Again. By Ethel Brunner. The Macmillan Co.

The Pagan. By Gordon Arthur Smith. Charles Scribner's Sons.

The London Venture. By Michael Arlen. Dodd, Mead and Co.

Trimmed with Red. By Wallace Irwin. George H. Doran Company.

Taxi. By George Agnew Chamberlain. The Bobbs-Merrill Co.

The Silence of Colonel Bramble. By André Maurois. John Lane Co.

The Wreckers. By Francis Lynde. Charles Scribner's Sons.

The Plunderer. By Henry Oyen. George H. Doran Company.

Benjy. By George Stevenson. John Lane Co.

Mount Music. By E. Œ. Somerville and Martin Ross. Longmans, Green and Co.

Treacherous Ground. By Johan Bojer. Moffat, Yard and Co.

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FOOTPRINTS ON PIETY HILL

BY AGNES DAY ROBINSON

HOME was a rambling old house with a welcoming hall through the centre: on the right, the parlors; on the left, study, conservatory, and dining-room, and the sight of huge fireplaces to warm the heart. At the end of this structure was a typical New England kitchen set up in what was then the Middle West; and beyond that, but connected with it, a long shed filled with cords on cords of piled wood. It stood on "Piety Hill", so named by the college boys because of the residence there, also, of a deacon of exceedingly pious mien. Evergreens and firs closed the place in from observation, and a circular drive led to what many a travel-worn guest came to call the Half-Way House. Here, on occasion, distinguished speakers for the Lyceum Lecture Association of Ann Arbor University stayed over for what is now known as "the week-end".

I recall the worst night of one lecture season. The wind howled like a beast of prey. The thickly falling snow swirled into huge drifts. Could there be an audience on such a night? But first there must be a speaker, and the train bearing Bret Harte to us was three hours late. Nearly seven when the sound of floundering horses and sleigh-bells drew the family to the side door. They had brought him across the lawn to spill into the house by the shortest way. Out he jumped into the shelter of a warm room with a leaping fire. Half-frozen, teeth chattering, feet like clogs, he thumped around the room like an irrepressible boy. There was something about two engines and drifts—we pulled off his overcoat to find him more effervescent than we had ever known him.

"It's so good to be here! Thought we'd never arrive!"

He shook hands with everybody, hugged the dog, crinkled his nose at the savory odors released from the region kitchenward, and plumped down on the rug before the roaring fire. It was like having a member of the family arrive the night before Thanksgiving. And he was as happy to be there as we were to lay hands and eyes upon him again. Upon his first visit he had been reserved, but reserve was not a plant that bloomed long in that house. Now he knew every nook and cranny, upstairs, downstairs, and bounced up to greet black Jinny who tried to conceal her delight with a pose of relief that "the dinner wan't done spiled fer Mr. Harte an' de hull fam'ly!"

"Suppose we cut that lecture tonight?" was his serious proposition. "There won't be a dozen there. I'd rather cancel the fee than get out into that storm again!"

Cancel the fee? Under contract. No one reasoned with him. Just brought his fur-lined coat, showed

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ourselves all bundled up, and the family piled into a long sleigh, with sprawling runners that would not overturn, and, in spite of his complaints, rushed him over to face the Ann Arbor audience. The amphitheatre, built to accommodate nearly three thousand, was packed. Mr. Harte looked in. Turning to the President of the University, he exclaimed:

"I have never received a compliment like this!"

The President gleamed with amusement that any weather could interfere with an audience that wanted to see and hear the author of "Miggles", "Tennessee's Partner", and "The Luck". After the lecture and the cold, white ride home, and the oyster-supper that always followed lectures, there was a two-hour session of story-telling around the fire, and another argument to get the man to bed. Owl-like in his habits, he would sit up until sunrise if he were enjoying himself.

The next day was Sunday and the world slept under a deep coverlet of snow and silence. Jinny was down with one of her neuralgic headaches she called "the misery". But she was a general; everything had been mustered on the kitchen-table for rapid work in the morning. The home-made sausages were baking in the oven and the waffles started when—in walked the guest! He was informed by the daughter of the house that guests were not supposed to break into kitchens.

"I haven't turned a waffle-iron in a year. Hand it over, Miss!"

"You will ruin them. Cooking waffles is an art."

"Known before you were born. I have cooked griddle-cakes under every condition; waffles are merely glorified griddle-cakes!"

No cook could have done better or acquired a redder face. Seated on a chair in front of the range he whirled the iron earnestly, anxiously, and bore to the table a plate crowned with a high pile of his glorified flapjacks.

One of the fascinations in knowing Bret Harte, aside from the fact that he was the maker of his stories, was the contrast between first and later impressions. At the beginning of acquaintance he was very quiet—not shy, but exceedingly reserved. He had, too, a slight touch of melancholy. He was so full of the melody of nature, so much the artistic man of genius, you marveled how he had the taste to draw those queer pathetic shapes, those brutal human deformities and be able, at the same time, to illuminate them with the torch of the spirit that dies in order that others may live. As he emerged from the shell of the acquaintance, the child-like spirit of the truly great began to gleam. He loved the home, real people, music, animals; and the liberty that allowed him to roam all over the place undisturbed by zealous attention. He was in the stable, the cellar, investigating every bin of apples, vegetables, barrel of meat, kit of mackerel. He never failed to make the round of the cellar with my mother, bringing up her findings for meals or admiring the plentiful stores of relishes, mince-meat, and preserves. He was like a boy just home from school, carrying the candle, wanting everything he saw, emerging at last with an eight-quart pan piled high.

By that time a dozen headaches would not have kept Jinny away from Mr. Harte's praise of her Virginia cooking, too precious to be waived even for an acute ailment. Accepting the pan with a condescending air, she would bundle both my mother and Mr. Harte from the kitchen that she might

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proceed with the "surprises" in store for us all.

No visit would be complete without a ride, and the stable came in for attention. Riding a good horse with twinkling feet and airs of pretended fright was a delight to Mr. Harte. A mare that had not been out for three days suited him perfectly. She was saddled. My horse was more mindful of schooling, but so emulous of his sister's frivolity that day that he threw training to the winds and there was a game of tag, in and out the trees, across snow-drifts, under low-hanging boughs, all over the grounds. Those were days when cross-saddle for a woman was impropriety itself. But Mr. Harte insisted his companion go into the house and don a suit of her brother's while he took off the side-saddle. There followed a lesson in riding à la South American and Indian women. It was an hour worth remembering; a floundering gallop through the drifts while the snow still sifted lightly down; and tales of the Forty-niners, of his own father, a highly cultivated professor who carried the classics in his pocket and brought up his boy on the myths of Greek heroes.

Many of our professors who had never seen a likeness of Bret Harte were surprised to meet, not a vigorous and perhaps rough man of brawn as they had anticipated from the character of his work, but a small-boned, delicate-featured being with abundant wavy hair and the air of one who belongs in a literary setting. The boy was strong in him but the finished man of letters sprang forward at the word, and it is easy to realize how he became one of our most successful diplomats. The love of music, especially of Beethoven's sonatas, was a passion. He would, as soon as everyone had gone, curl up on a couch, pillow his head in the crook of his arm, and ask for the Fifth, then for the Seventh Symphony, winding up with a plea for the First.

After writing innumerable autographs in the students' albums, Mr. Harte went away. That night came a telegram to Mother:

Arrived. Everything P. D. Preserve this autograph.

BRET HARTE

"P. D." was a family expression for "perfekly disgustin'" borrowed from the idyll of Red Mountain. Nothing was "horrid". It was "P. D." We all loved "M'liss".

It can hardly be claimed that we really knew George William Curtis. He came once to the Half-Way House, at which time we gave a reception in his honor, inviting the Faculty. He was aristocratic to a degree, but without the suggestion of withdrawal frequently characteristic of the thoroughbred who has known but one way of life,—his own. Plus this natural condition, which put its unmistakable stamp upon him, he had great magnetism and a deep-abiding sincerity. Add to these gifts the qualities of human responsiveness and flexibility that are likely to make "interesting" such men as editors, doctors, journalists, and sometimes ministers, who have many daily and different human contacts. He excited the greatest enthusiasm among the members of the Faculty, and during his short stay a steady stream of callers came to pay their compliments. Part of this, of course, was due to the Editor's Easy Chair in "Harper's Magazine". But the name by which he was nationally known, "The Friend of the Republic", had aroused even more interest in the world at large. His personality,

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whether as author or standard-bearer, was that of a familiar friend who came closer than most writers. He represented the best in American ideals, and for that reason those who met him were fascinated by him. Then, too, there was a style about him in appearance, as there was in his writing, and a more or less constant flare of wit. The youngest member of the family was made happy by his sending back an autographed likeness of a strongly-modeled face, adorned by side-whiskers — the mode in that period—with eyes of a kind, penetrating blue.

So the coming and the going, on Piety Hill, of those who contributed richly in books and in other ways to their day and generation and whom Youth, in its thoughtlessness, took quite as a matter of course!

NEW FRENCH BOOKS

BY R. LE CLERC PHILLIPS

IN the March issue of THE BOOKMAN it was mentioned that M. Lenôtre will very shortly publish a new book dealing with what perhaps constitutes the most extraordinary of all historical mysteries—that of the real fate of little Louis XVII of France. This and the identity of the Man with the Iron Mask have probably excited more controversy and more interest and certainly more printer's ink than any other mysteries in history—with regard to the little Dauphin it is said that already over one thousand volumes have been written around him. And now M. Lenôtre is to write another; it would seem as if he, too, cannot resist the fascination of the subject, for he has already written one brilliant, if all too short study on it; it appeared in the second series of his "Vieilles Maisons, Vieux Papiers", published as far back as 1903, and is, I believe, entitled "Chez Simon".

The story M. Lenôtre there tells is astounding and seems well substantiated by the evidence brought forward. It will be remembered that the shoemaker Simon and his wife were appointed guardians of the little Dauphin in the Temple and that after holding the post for about six months, they resigned — apparently without reason. Simon some little time afterward was executed at the same time, as far as I remember, as Robespierre, and the widow Simon, after many vicissitudes, finally found a refuge in a home for incurables. All this is, of course, well known, but it is from this last point onward that M. Lenôtre's narrative becomes so remarkable. He states that the woman Simon had not long been an inmate in the home before she began to babble and chatter about the little Dauphin, declaring that he had never died in the Temple but that she had effected his escape, on quitting her post as his guardian, by

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taking him away among her household effects and substituting another child in his place. These chatterings provoked much interest among the old women of the home, but with the passing of years they lost their novelty.

In 1805, the old woman was visited by a mysterious young man whom she declared she recognized as the Dauphin. Her talk now aroused the curiosity of the doctors attached to the home and from them the interest spread through the whole district. The old woman resolutely refused to give any details of the abduction, always declaring, "Je parlerai devant la Justice". At the Restoration she was visited by Royalist generals, ambassadors, and by the Duchesse d'Angoulême herself, the poor little "Madame Royale" of the Revolution, and sister of the Dauphin. Soon after this she was summoned to appear at the police headquarters, where she still maintained that the Dauphin did not die in the Temple and again resolutely refused to describe the circumstances of the abduction. She said enough, however, to cause the police to forbid her ever again to mention the subject under pain of the most severe penalties. Terrified, the old woman from this time onward held her peace; but on her death-bed in 1819 she was questioned by the nuns who attended her and she died saying, "I will always say what I have said".

M. Lenôtre states it as his personal opinion that the widow Simon did not lie in telling the tale she did. It now remains to be seen whether M. Lenôtre in his new book on the mystery pursues his investigations along the same lines as those of the study I have just quoted or whether, with the new evidence which it is said that he has unearthed, he will approach it from an entirely different standpoint. His Revolutionary studies are written with such charm and vivacity that all those (and they are no small number) whom they have fascinated, will look forward to his further contribution to the unraveling of the mystery of Louis XVII.

In "Prime Jeunesse" Pierre Loti continues his autobiography begun in "Le Roman d'un Enfant". In this second volume he describes his early youth from the age of thirteen up to the day he enters the naval training ship "Le Borda" as a cadet of the French Navy. There is absolutely no "story" in the autobiography, but there is—Loti. Loti, with all his wonted mournful sadness, and the same pure and beautiful literary style that is his alone. But somehow, the indescribable charm of such works as "Pêcheur d'Islande", "Madame Chrysanthème", and "Ramuntcho" is missing; these tales of the tragic fisherfolk of Brittany, the exotic beauties of Japan, and the romantic loves of the people of the Basque country possess an almost magic glamour which it is difficult, and perhaps even impossible to infuse into a mere autobiography. For this reason it is perhaps unfair to draw a comparison between his new book and those which made the author's name famous over the civilized world. But nevertheless it is precisely this peculiar and matchless glamour that we seek and expect in Loti, and charming though his new book is, the world will remember him by "Pêcheur d'Islande" and "Madame Chrysanthème" rather than by his autobiography. Nevertheless, "Prime Jeunesse" contains passages exquisite in their simplicity and tender melancholy, and the following one gives a good idea of the atmosphere of the book (Loti's

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sister has just become engaged to be married):

Mais cet avenir que les deux fiancés s'étaient là promis l'un à l'autre, a fui comme un songe; leur jeunesse a passé, leur âge mûr a passé, et leur vieillesse côté à côté; ils ont connu les enfants de leurs petits-enfants, et depuis quelques années ils dorment ensemblent sous les mêmes dalles de cimetière....

The most touching part of the book is where Loti describes the reading of his dead brother's letter of farewell, written as he lay dying of tropical anæmia on board the steamer which was bringing him back to France. The family is assembled for the reading of the elder son's farewell; the father begins, but tears break his voice and he is obliged to pass the letter to an uncle who reads it through in a dull and monotonous voice. Part of the letter is worth quoting:

Je meurs en Dieu, dans la foi et le repentir; mes pêchés sont rouges comme le cramoisi, mais il me blanchira; du reste n'a-t-il pas dit: Quiconque croit en moi aura la vie? O Dieu! mon père, oui, je crois en toi, en ton Saint-Esprit, et mes prières ardentes montent vers ton fils afin qu'il intercède pour moi et qu'il m'aide à traverser la sombre vallée de l'ombre de la mort. O Dieu, j'ai pêché; mais tu es un père de pardon et d'amour. Aie pitié, Seigneur, reçois-moi comme un de tes enfants, car je crois et quiconque croit sera sauvé.

The author makes use of two chapters in which to describe his first love-affair, the heroine being a wandering, thieving gypsy girl; we may not approve the morality of the affair, but we certainly must admire the art of the beautiful writing that the memory of this episode inspires.

We do not look for humor in Loti, but he gives us an amusing description of the weekly *réunions* of an aunt of his in Paris, whose only fault was "celui d'être poétesse" and whose delight it was to invite all her singular collection of "poets" to read aloud their latest productions. "A peine achevaient-ils, que c'était une ovation bruyante; tout le monde les entourait, en criant, en se pâmant d'extase, et, à mon avis, il n'y avait jamais de quoi devenir épileptique comme ça." Evidently Loti has small sympathy with and scant respect for the whole brotherhood of minor poets, for he speaks of their "longs cheveux qui étaient encore à cette époque le symptôme extérieur de leur genre de maladie".

The volume concludes with the author's description of his first night on "Le Borda". He is now a sailor and as he falls asleep he hears the voice of the sea which seems to say: "A présent je vous tiens, et, vous verrez, c'est pour la vie."

I have just been reading a volume of recently-published short stories by Paul Bourget entitled "Le Justicier", and have been interested in contrasting in my mind the type of short story which finds favor in France with that for which there is apparently such an insistent demand over here. The differences between the two types are so pronounced as to be almost violent. That note of somewhat strident optimism that appears to be so essential to a successful short story in America is almost entirely lacking in the French short stories; the French writers do not flinch before brutality or pessimism, sadness or failure, disillusionment or regrets, but then, neither do French readers, who desire truth first and "uplift" afterward—a long way afterward. In fact, they will not be displeased if the "uplift" is missing altogether. This readiness on the part of the French to accept grim or tragic themes often invests the French short stories with a breadth and power that must, of necessity, be lacking in those written most often only to "uplift" a public unwilling to recognize sorrow or failure or even, it would seem, death itself. And then the French short-story writer pays scrupulous attention to

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character-drawing; he will sometimes use over a thousand words to describe the inherited tendencies, early environment, and acquired habits of one of his characters; the American writer will, on the other hand (or so it seems to me), strain every nerve to obtain movement and, of course, "uplift". Lastly, the French writer insists on a polished literary style, no matter how slight or small his story may be, while the American writer (or should I say reader?) evidently prefers plot.

"Le Justicier" contains five rather long short stories, the first giving its name to the volume; it is a careful study of the human failure to read aright the hearts and motives of others. The two Marnat brothers hate each other with a deadly hatred; the elder regards the younger as a thief, a cad, and a profligate (he is indeed all three). After succeeding in the world as an engineer, the elder brother returns to France from South America in order to erect a monument to the memory of his two sons fallen in the Great War. The widow of his brother (now dead five years) comes to him to implore his help for her son. Marnat repulses her. But she produces letters written to her by her husband which give the younger Marnat's side of the case. They are a revelation to the elder brother; he is horrified by his almost lifelong failure to understand his brother's character. Reparation is due the dead man, and the elder Marnat takes his nephew back to South America with him in order to establish him in life.

"La Cachette" is a rather bustling tale of the finding of treasure and jewels hidden during the French Revolution by the *émigré* owner whose sole descendant is a poor governess teaching the children of a French *parvenu;* the ancestral château, where the treasure lay hidden, has been sold by her father to a wealthy Jew. Years after the sale, the treasure is discovered by a young history student who finds the clue to its hiding place in an old history book he is studying; he brings the jewels to the governess, who refuses them, for in the contract of sale between her late father and the Jew now living in her home, there is a fatal clause "avec tout ce qu'il contiendra, lors de l'entrée en possession". And so the Jew, already wallowing in money, is offered and accepts the ancient family heirlooms of an old French family.

"Le Carré d'Orties" is a French Revolution story of the daughter of a noble house whose life is saved by a fiery insurgent, a surgeon in the Revolutionary Army, who loves her. The wide social and political gulf between them makes the girl spurn his offer of marriage. But gratitude for his devotion in saving her life changes her feelings and, afraid of what they may lead to, she decides never to see the Revolutionary again. Both die unmarried.

"Le Fruit Juge l'Arbre" is a study of an unfrocked priest, while "L'Apache" is a tragic tale of a chauffeur, who once having been a member of a band of apaches and having escaped from them in an attempt to lead an honest life, is tracked down and murdered by his former accomplices.

Although none of these tales can be said to have a really happy ending, there is movement in all of them; indeed, there is even a definite plot in one or two, and this, coupled with the admirable way in which they are written, should more than compensate for an occasional note of sombreness.

In his new novel, "Laurence Al-

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bani", M. Bourget has struck what is for him a somewhat unusual note. He has turned from the feverish atmosphere of Parisian society and has placed his scene in a country district near Hyères in the South of France; with one exception, his characters do not belong to the *haut monde*, but to the laboring classes of that district, and the story is so puritanical in tone that from this point of view it might have been written by an Anglo-Saxon schoolteacher instead of one of the leading French novelists of the day. The book has had such a large sale that it would seem there is a demand for novels which, as the French publishers put it, can be placed "entre toutes les mains" and yet be the work of master-writers—a combination rare enough in France. To those who know Paul Bourget mainly by his novels of society life, "Laurence Albani" will come as a surprise.

The heroine, who gives her name to the title of the novel, is the daughter of a market gardener near Hyères. Together with her parents, her brother and sister, she had before the story opens been employed in working in her father's garden, growing those flowers for which the South of France is famous. A certain Lady Agnes Vernham, whose villa was near the Albani home, had become attracted by the beauty and amiability of Laurence and had invited her to go to England as her companion. (Such invitations are scattered with a generous profusion in novels; in real life they are all but unknown and one is faintly surprised to find a novelist of M. Bourget's standing making use of such a hackneyed and at the same time improbable situation.) So Laurence goes to England and becomes quite a fine lady. Lady Agnes, however, is inconsiderate enough to die without having made a will, and Laurence is forced to return to France no better off than she left it except for a coating of society polish.

When the story opens we find her living with her parents, successfully earning her living by making fancy boxes for a shop in Hyères. She has two admirers: the honest market-gardener Pascal Couture and an ex-naval officer, Pierre Libertat, who, wealthy and of ancient race, lives with his mother at Toulon. Libertat, as a man of the world, makes advances to Laurence, who, of course, repulses them (for the novel may be placed "entre toutes les mains"). Her rebuffs only serve to increase Libertat's ardor, and to such a point that he actually resolves to propose marriage to the gardener's daughter. All those who are acquainted with French family life and who are aware of the enormous part that social and financial considerations play on either side in the question of marriage, will be a little taken aback by the ease with which the young man embraces the idea of marriage when he finds that philandering will not gain him what he seeks.

For some time Laurence receives his proposal with favor, but circumstances intervene which lead her to judge between him and her humble suitor, Pascal Couture. It is Pascal who emerges the more triumphantly from the test, and Laurence, at last realizing the nobility of his character and the strength of his love for her, informs him that if he still desires her as his wife, she is willing to accept him. And on this idyllic note, so rare in French novels, the story ends.

Prime Jeunesse. By Pierre Loti. Paris: Calmann-Lévy.

Le Justicier. By Paul Bourget. Paris: Plon.

Laurence Albani. By Paul Bourget. Paris: Plon.

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SOME CURRENTS AND BACKWATERS OF CONTEMPORARY POETRY

BY RAYMOND M. WEAVER

WERE a God asked to recite his life, he would do so in two words" is an opinion expressed in "Le Centaure" of Maurice de Guérin. For, such seems to be the idea implied, an authentic Deity would be too intensely employed in living, too supremely rejoiced in the harmony and beauty of the world, to pause for self-conscious disquisitions on the integrity of his perfection. He would so adequately realize in the flesh and spirit, the loftiest dreams in marble and verse and sound and color of the men we commonly call poets, that he would not be impelled to strive after vicarious perfection—the perfection after which the artist strives.

But this conception of an Olympian being to whom poetry is an irrelevancy, because such a being is in his life a poem, has no reality beyond the dreams of poets. The human animal, here for so fleeting a space, cast among so many hardships, filled with such ineffectual virtues, with desires so incommensurate and so inconsistent,—it has been his tragic destiny to differentiate between the serenity of his imagined Gods and the animal integrity of his Darwinian forebears. "With stupidity and a good digestion, man can endure much," wrote Carlyle. And such a bovine congregation of the dully enduring would, with the High Gods, be without laureates and poetasters. Where there is literature, there also is imperfection. There is Dante, driven by defeat and exile into a bitter immortality; Milton's last great poems are the consolation of a defeated partisan, old and blind, and cut off from the active life to which the maturity of his powers had been passionately devoted; Shakespeare wrote no more when he could afford to live without writing; Leopardi devoted himself in despair to scholarship and poetry, because physical infirmity disabled him from active life; Raleigh wrote his "History of the World", Bunyan his "Pilgrim's Progress" in captivity: they dreamed grand dreams in their dungeons because they could not live really in the free open air. In illustrious cases such as these there is a failure on the part of the environment—an external imperfection that irritates superior souls to find compensation in their dreams, for the faultiness of reality. "Those that the Lord loveth He chasteneth" is the first canon of literary criticism.

All noble poetry arises from the tragic incompatibility between irrational nature and rational desire. "Man has henceforth this cause for pride," writes Jean Lahor; "he has bethought himself of justice in a universe without justice." This is the

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poetry of authentic inspiration: genuine, thoughtful, and earnest poetry that is, as Sully Prudhomme says, "the dream by which man aspires to a superior life". And the value of such poetry, in the words of Bacon, "hath been to give some shadow of satisfaction to the mind of man in these points wherein the nature of things doth deny it; the world being in proportion inferior to the soul; by reason thereof there is agreeable to the spirit of man a more ample greatness, a more compact goodness, and a more absolute variety, than can be found in the nature of things." And such poetry is written from an inner compulsion, "something separate from the volition of the author", as Scott, the sanest of poets, declared. All genuine poetry in the world is of this sort. And the bulk of such poetry, poetry of seasoned experience and heavenly inspiration, is impressively slight.

It would be lunacy to believe that the great bulk of printed matter that passes under the ambiguous name of poetry, arises out of any such inner tragic compulsion. I have before me no less than thirty-four volumes of the "latest verse". And this impressive array of volumes eloquently proves that the frustration at the basis of book-making is not invariably of the nature that has provoked the noblest art: the imperfection, in most cases, seems to have been in the nature of the poet, even more than in the failure of the external world. Some few of these volumes have within them some breath of the really divine afflatus; these merit more than a passing comment. But the great body of the collection has little claim to consideration as genuine and competent poetry.

Most of this modern loquacity in verse—a loquacity interpreted naively by some as a symptom of a Poetry Renaissance—is provoked by interests essentially foreign to the poetry of authentic inspiration. Some of it—such as Mr. Markham's "Gates of Paradise"—is, at its best, rhymed moralizing: eloquent, sincere, restrained, but withal too absorbed in immediate domestic and sociological interests to touch the deepest mysteries of the heart of man. This is essentially a Protestant poetry—a poetry, as says Oliveira Matino, "des sociétés sensées, heureuses, riches, libres, en ce qui concerne les institutions et l'économie externe, mais incapables d'aucune action grandiose." Besides this poetry of didacticism, there are books—like F. P. A.'s "Something Else Again"—that are written frankly with a humorous intent, and to censure these for not being something else would be as absurd as reprobating a gargoyle for not being one of the cherubim.

Besides the satirical and humorous verse on the one hand, the didactic verse on the other (two types of rhyming whose best achievements are not strictly "nurslings of immortality"), there is a third type of verse—a type ranging in its examples from the pompous and hysterical inanities of the Della-Cruscans through the average efforts of the minor poets, and graduating imperceptibly into the poetry of genuine inspiration. These are the second-hand poets;—they mimic the gestures of the masters, but "they have no speculation in the eyes that they do glare with", and their mimicry is ever in perilous danger of appearing ridiculous caricature. Every crop of new verses brings to bed a litter of this stamp, some of passing interest, others doomed to face in silence their own intrinsic demerits. The better of the current poetry of this type gives either pretty, or grace-

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ful, or clever, or lively expression to amiable sentiments, to thoughts not too far below the dead-level of the best current opinion. Mr. John Chipman Farrar (in his "Forgotten Shrines") and Miss Lucile Vernon (in her "Mephistopheles Puffeth the Sun Out") are pleasing versifiers of this variety.

These thirty-four volumes as a whole are shot through with the traits of our New Poetry—poetry whose chief novelty is its barbarism: poetry of aggressive egotism, of promiscuous animal exuberance; a poetry of shreds and patches, that stimulates—when it stimulates at all—by the crudity of its methods and the recklessness of its emotions.

The most notable example of the poetry of barbarism in this aggregation of thirty-four volumes is "The Golden Whales of California" of Vachel Lindsay. "There are poets of times and localities; but America needs a poet of all-America", is the credo that adorns the jacket of Mr. Lindsay's volume. "With each new collection of his poems Vachel Lindsay more definitely fills this need. His vision is constantly growing wider and deeper. From Massachusetts Bay to the Golden Gate he sees the ardour and young confusion and burning promise of our life." It was the pathetic ambition of Whitman—as of Mr. Lindsay after him—to be the spokesman of the tendencies of this country; and it has been one of life's little ironies that Whitman does not appeal to those whom he describes, but rather to the *dilettanti* he despises. As George Santayana has said:

"The poet who loves the picturesque aspects of labour and vagrancy will hardly be the poet of the poor. He may have described their figure and occupation, in neither of which are they much interested; he will not have read their souls. They will prefer to him any sentimental story-teller, any sensational dramatist, and moralizing poet; for they are hero-worshippers by temperament, and are too wise or too unfortunate to be enamoured of themselves or of the conditions of their existence."

Ella Wheeler Wilcox, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Edwin Markham might with some justice be called poets of the people: Mr. Lindsay even less so than Whitman. Both Whitman and Mr. Lindsay in the singularity of their literary form throw a challenge to the conventions of verse and of language; but whereas Whitman's self-avowed "barbaric yawp" has a side that is not mere perversity or affectation, Mr. Lindsay's verse makes a blatantly self-conscious attempt to be primitive. His is a mannered striving to be "natural"—and the studio savagery of his method would doubtless alarm a genuinely primitive people, as it entertains a jaded coterie of the over-refined. In its search for progressively adequate stimulation, a highly elaborated civilization migrates from the sanity and sweetness of the early Homeric ideals, through the terrible, the horrible, and seeks ultimate excitement either in the vulgar or in the corrupt.

Mr. Lindsay's poetry is a glorification of vulgarity; he proclaims mighty and mystical intimations in the common, the sordid, the cheap, and the undisciplined. As for his boasted "vision", he has a keen eye for the miscellaneous "young confusion" of our intricate life: but to call this "vision" is to be guilty in earnest of the sort of irony that was at the basis of Voltaire's technique of most effective satire. What distinguishes Mr. Lindsay from the great bulk of

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the practitioners of the "New Poetry" is the genuine vitality of his work. Though the defects of his art are patent enough—lack of distinction, absence of beauty, confusion of ideas, incapacity permanently to please—, still, if the power to stimulate is the beginning of greatness, Mr. Lindsay's ebullitions of lustiness are to be imputed to him for righteousness. His manner is "all his own".

"The Dark Wind", the first volume of W. J. Turner, a young English poet, is a volume of real distinction, interesting both for its art and for its accomplished artifice. Mr. Turner writes in two veins—one, the lapidary idealization of José-Maria de Hérédia; the other, the keen and reverent satirical bitterness of Rupert Brooke and Doctor John Donne. There is no careless rapture in any of his verse: it has the studious rigidity of a cultivated and audacious craftsmanship, but with the magic of genuine inspiration. Mr. Turner attempts to avoid reporting experience as it is distorted by our analytical habits of speech, but rather to report it as it is immediately perceived by the senses.

When a child attempts to draw a cube, his conscientious effort usually expresses itself not in a foreshortened transcription of the object, seen under a peculiar light and from a single point of view; he knows that the cube has a number of square surfaces, and to eliminate from his representation a single one of these interesting rectangular faces seems to him a misleading simplification of reality. So the child records, not the retinal image, but a flanged aggregation of rectangles. The child in his drawing has analyzed experience: he reports the residue of his analysis, not his immediate perception. It is a curious paradox that only a very sophisticated art attempts to record unsophisticated experience. By the normal habits of speech we say: "A bird is singing in the tree", when our unanalyzed perception is, "The tree sings". We say, "Out in the night the rain came down in torrents", when the report of our senses is, "The night dripped".

The effort of the Imagists has been to divest themselves of the preconceptions and distortions of naively analytic speech, and to dive bodily into the stream of sensation, catching the passing phenomenon in all its novelty and idiosyncrasy. But the moving image that the Imagists attempt with such sophistication to record as color, sound, heat, taste, etc., is also impregnated with qualities such as pain, fear, joy, malice, feebleness, expectancy—qualities which in the most naive perception are attributed to the objects in their fulness and just as they are felt. Thus the sun is not only bright and warm in the same way that he is round, but by the same right he is also happy, arrogant, ever-young, and all-seeing. "I assert for myself", said William Blake, "that I do not behold the outward creation, and that it is to me hindrance and not action. 'What', it will be questioned, 'when the sun rises, do you not see a round disk of fire something like a guinea?' Oh! no, no! I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host, crying, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty!' I question not my corporeal eye any more than I would question a window concerning a sight. I look through it, and not with it."

Mr. Turner looks not only with his eye—and with the disciplined vision of the successful Imagist—but he looks also, as every true poet must, through it. He succeeds in disengaging his perceptions from the algebraic and propositional language of practical

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speech, and is conscious of objects as a projected aggregation of sensations and moods. A record of this type of perception demands, of course, a highly sophisticated and analytical mind, an unusual sensitiveness to stimuli, and a use of language that must do violence to prosaic habits of speech. The resulting poetry is at the same time beautiful, powerful, and strange. And not the least interesting peculiarity of Mr. Turner's art is that he has made no startling departures into irregular verse forms: he scans like a model Victorian, and he evinces no Miltonic prejudices against the use of rhyme. Nor does Mr. Turner seek to startle by the choice of bizarre subjects. He writes on "Haystacks" and "Sunflowers" and "Hollyhocks" and "Aeroplanes" and "Recollecting a Visit". And when he makes adventures in "Ecstasy" and "Solitude" and "Sea-Madness", his originality arises from the directness and subtlety of perception, not from an indulgence in the corrupt hankering after clinical situations: a hankering he decently avoids.

Winifred Welles, in her first volume of poems, "The Hesitant Heart", exhibits none of the peculiarities of Mr. Turner beyond those shared in common by all genuine poets. Whereas Mr. Turner's is the more studied artistry—a hard, frozen, white, luminous quality, like a petrified dream—Miss Welles's is an art at times as ingenuous as Emily Dickinson's, though always classical in its impeccable taste. There are in the book no miscellaneous rampings of the "spontaneous Me", no Mid-Victorian ventures in well-behaved hysteria, no definitive justifications of the ways of God to man, no valentine insipidities. "The Hesitant Heart" will be highly prized by those who find excellence in sweet-blooded serenity, in piety that finds no sacrilege in unembittered laughter, in a fine receptivity to loveliness, and in autobiographical restraint. The scope of experience covered by this unpretentious volume is hardly coextensive with life: but real distinction of achievement is not invariably synonymous with leaving nothing unsaid.

Edwin Arlington Robinson—unlike Mr. Turner and Miss Welles—is no new name among accredited poets. He has already won golden opinions from the most discriminating critics, for the nobility of his verse; for the incisive clarity of his insight—etched as by acid on the human heart; for the maturity of his judgment; for the economy of his method. His latest book, "Lancelot", a narrative poem in blank verse, is his second adventure in the field of the Arthurian legend. Any modern treatment of the Arthur material challenges comparison at once with some of the illustrious names in English literature: Tennyson, Swinburne, Arnold, and Morris, to mention only the best known. Mr. Robinson's "Lancelot" is no misbegotten changeling in this notable company. Mr. Robinson significantly chooses to recount the tragic end of Lancelot's love for Arthur's Queen: the love of Lancelot crucified in the shame of disloyalty, worn down to a pitiful and enslaving tenderness,—the choking embers of a passion that pales in the haunting recollection of his fleeting vision of the Gleam.

Mr. Robinson's genius is essentially dramatic; he dispenses with the traditional paraphernalia of mediæval romance; the pious and sentimental superstition of the glamour and picturesqueness of chivalry he does not reverently avow. His interest is not, with Tennyson, to lavish epithets on the trappings of symbolic pageants, but

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rather to search the mind and blood of a complex and passionately idealistic nature when soul is at war with soul. The analysis is subtle, unsentimental, and contagiously sympathetic. It is a mannerism of romantic poets to celebrate the delicious pangs of amorous stirring, and to heighten the poignancy of a biological eruption by prating of passion and calling it eternal. Mr. Robinson is a heretic to this confession: he shows us love among the ruins of itself. With Dante he teaches that no other furniture is needed for hell than the literal ideals and fulfilments of romantic desire. Yet, though he is a tragic moralist, he is not a poet of despairing disenchantment. Through the gloom that enshrouds the end of his poem there is the promise of something other than utter night. Camelot and Arthur's kingdom, it is true, go down. Guinevere, rich in the bitter memories of Joyous Gard—though interested even in her desolation to indulge the amorous casuistry of how different her history might have been had she been a brunette like Isold or Vivian—meets Lancelot for the last time at Almesbury. Guinevere is left a pathetically hopeless creature; Mr. Robinson seems not completely convinced by the logic of Malory: "that while she lived she was a true lover, and therefore had a good end". Lancelot rides away, haunted by the face of Guinevere. But this wan face recedes and fades, melts gradually into the face of Galahad: then even Galahad's face fades,—

And there were no more faces. There was nothing.
But always in the darkness he rode on,
Alone: and in the darkness came the Light.

"Le dernier acte est sanglant, quelque belle que soit la comédie en tout le reste", wrote Pascal; "on jette enfin de la terre sur la tête, et en voilà pour jamais." This grim pronouncement, were it as true in its conclusion as in its other parts, would reduce to an irrelevancy one of the most valuable of recent books: "For Remembrance: Soldier Poets Who Have Fallen in the War", by A. St. John Adcock. Among the many atrocities of war, a majority of the so-called "war-poetry" appears now as not the least terrible. Loyal and glibly oratorical men and women have sat at home and celebrated with Homeric rhetoric what a fine thing it is to be a soldier: a conviction after the best literary traditions. Unhampered by any first-hand taste of actual modern warfare, this group of poets sang to the people at large, lilting martial refrains, and doubtless exerted some indeterminate influence in facilitating the progress of the war. But such works, though answering a possible purpose once, bear about them at the present day the inappropriateness of an anachronism. The multiplication of volumes of this type provokes some to a sedulous and indiscriminating avoidance of war-poetry: a prejudice that needs such a book as "For Remembrance" to be revolutionized to a juster judgment.

"For Remembrance" is a series of biographical accounts, illustrated by

Gates of Paradise. By Edwin Markham. Doubleday, Page and Co.
Something Else Again. By Franklin P. Adams. Doubleday, Page and Co.
Forgotten Shrines. By John Chipman Farrar. Yale University Press.
Mephistopheles Puffeth the Sun Out. By Lucile Vernon. The Stratford Co.
The Golden Whales of California. By Vachel Lindsay. The Macmillan Co.
The Dark Wind. By W. J. Turner. E. P. Dutton and Co.
The Hesitant Heart. By Winifred Welles. B. W. Huebsch.
Lancelot. By Edwin Arlington Robinson. Thomas Seltzer.
For Remembrance. By A. St. John Adcock. George H. Doran Company.
Picture-Show. By Siegfried Sassoon. E. P. Dutton and Co.
Argonaut and Juggernaut. By Osbert Sitwell. Alfred A. Knopf.

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photographs and selections from their poetry, of fifty-four warrior-poets. As a record of the lofty idealism, the noble self-sacrifice of these essentially peace-loving men, this volume is a necessarily inadequate tribute. As a commentary upon the relations between war and poets, between warrior-poets and war-poets, it is a uniquely important volume. It is an obvious fact that under the stress of actual war conditions, these men did not grind out verses because of any idle love of art-for-art's sake; the writing that was done, was done under abnormal stress of emotion—and in a number of cases, men who had written poetry as civilians wrote none as soldiers, while in other cases unrhyming civilians were transformed into eloquent poets. The poetry that was written seems to have been almost entirely of one of three kinds: 1) the poetry of the will-to-believe; 2) the poetry of escape; 3) satirical and denunciatory verse.

A considerable bulk of all poetry is the poetry of the will-to-believe. This poetry is the cry of the man who sings in the dark to keep his courage high; an attempt to strengthen our faith by repeating the articles of our creed. Such poetry says, "Oh, Lord, I believe; help Thou my unbelief." Much of this type of poetry seems to have been written by warrior-poets: a rehearsal to themselves of the ideals that had forced them into the war: a rehearsal that fortified the courage, and like earnest prayer worked in the heart its own reward. A poignant example of this type of poetry is Joyce Kilmer's,—

My shoulders ache beneath my pack
(Lie easier, Cross, upon His back).

I march with feet that burn and smart
(Tread, Holy Feet, upon my heart)....

My rifle hand is still and numb
(From Thy pierced palm red rivers come).

Lord, Thou didst suffer more for me
Than all the hosts of land and sea.

So let me render back again
This millionth of Thy gift. Amen.

How trivial seem most of the "war-poets" after verses like these!

The poetry of retreat was the poetry written by soldiers on subjects not connected with the war at all: an escape in imagination from the immediate intolerable actualities to dreams of the friendly scenes of normal, peaceful life. While our "war-poets" at home were telling us, in the Ruskin vein, of the flaming joys of the lust of battle, Francis Ledwidge, wounded, writes thus wistfully of his mother in Ireland:

God made my mother on an April day
From sorrow and the mist along the sea,
Lost birds' and wanderers' songs and ocean spray,
And the moon loved her, wandering jealously....

Kind heart she has for all on hill and wave
Whose hopes grew wings, like ants, to fly away.
I bless the God who such a mother gave
This poor bird-hearted singer of a day.

Such poets had their hearts in the war; but the war was not in their hearts.

"After the eager swiftness of the first onset", says Mr. Adcock, "our soldiers settled down to a dogged endurance of the filth and peril and tedium of trench warfare.... The songs of those later days no longer or seldom reiterate the shining ideals for which the singers were fighting, but take these for granted, and, instead, expose and denounce with stern outspokenness the injustice, the madness, the tragic misery and indescribable beastliness of war." Poetry of such satirical or unromantic treatment of war appears in two current volumes: Siegfried Sassoon's "Picture-Show", and Osbert Sitwell's "Argonaut and Juggernaut". Mr. Sassoon's "Aftermath" is a reminder to the "war-poets":

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Have you forgotten yet?...
Look down, and swear by the slain of the War
that you'll never forget.

Do you remember the dark months you held
the sector at Mametz—
The nights you watched and wired and dug and
piled sandbags on parapets?

Do you remember the rats; and the stench
Of corpses rotting in front of the front-line
trench—
And dawn coming, dirty-white, and chill with
a hopeless rain?
Do you ever stop and ask, "Is it all going to
happen again?"

Do you remember that hour of din before the
attack—
And the anger, the blind compassion that seized
and shook you then
As you peered at the doomed and haggard faces
of your men?

Do you remember the stretcher-cases lurking
back
With dying eyes and lolling heads—those ashen
grey
Masks of the lads who once were keen and
kind and gay?

Have you forgotten yet?...
Look up, and swear by the green of the spring
that you'll never forget.

THE SUPPRESSION OF BOOKS

An Open Letter

BY HENRY LITCHFIELD WEST

To the Editor of THE BOOKMAN:

It would be a fine thing if all the material things in the world could be utilized only for the advancement of morals. Normal nature inwardly rebels, for instance, when the virgin copper plate, which should be reserved for a Whistler etching, is perverted by some counterfeiter to the production of spurious money. We want the world to be ideal. Our better instincts seek the development of the good and the true. The trouble is, of course, that this means our personal, arbitrary conception of goodness and truth. As for those who dispute our standards, anathema be upon them!

From the very beginning of the world there has been this conflict between ideas. The rotation of the earth around the sun, the survival of human personality after death, the divinity of kings, revealed religion—all these, and a thousand others, have had their proponents and antagonists. Over and above every dispute thunders the voice of authority. Some favored personage — pope, president, tsar, priest, judge or selectman of the village—undertakes to decide what is right and what is wrong. In the olden days Galileo and Copernicus disturbed the current of prevailing thought and were denounced. Conditions and restraints are not always imposed by the law. More often they are the outcome of uncontradicted utterances of individuals in high position. "When I ope my mouth let no dog bark"; and officialdom having pronounced its verdict, the person who protests is characterized as Bolshevik and forthwith passes under the ban.

And yet there are independent souls in the world who do not think or act along conventional lines. It so hap-

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pens, also, that these wanderers from the beaten path are, in nearly every case, the writers of books. Woe be unto them if they tread upon the tender corns of conventionality. Vengeance waits at once upon each daring author. The book which he has written must be suppressed!

The temptation to write upon the suppression of books is stimulated by two or three recent episodes in the New York courts. It is not my intention to enter into a discussion of the merits or demerits of these cases. As a matter of fact, I have never read the books in question; and let me add, lest I be misunderstood, that I do not appear as a personal complainant. I have never written a book which has been banned; I am no defender of the vicious and impure; and I am neither a socialist nor an anarchist. I am merely an average American citizen who is impressed by a situation which leads a conservative newspaper like the New York "Times" to inquire editorially, "Is Any Book Safe?" The writer in the "Times" goes further than merely asserting that one of the books against which proceedings have been brought "is regarded by a great many lovers of literature as one of the most notable American books of recent years". He calls attention to the existence of a statute under which when any individual makes complaint, a magistrate must issue a warrant for the arrest of the publisher and for the seizure of all copies of the objectionable book or picture, their sale being also summarily stopped. If any magistrate and three judges of Special Sessions agree with the man who makes the complaint, the book is suppressed for good. In conclusion the editorial says:

> Fortunately the courts have generally been far more reasonable than the statute, which despite intelligent judges goes a long way to restricting the reading of the public to such books as do not seem objectionable to any man who makes a living by looking for unlawful publications. The public morals must be preserved, but surely there is some wiser way of preserving them than this.

It may be worth while, as briefly as possible, to consider whether there is a wiser way and incidentally to discuss a few of the many phases of a timely topic.

The suppression of books goes back two hundred years before Christ, when Roman magistrates sought for and burned "books of magic"; and it has continued with more or less intensity to the present day. The most potent factor in this suppression has been the church; and the stringent and persistent exercise of this authority through many centuries accounts largely for the present attitude of the world toward books. We have been accustomed to the habit, as it were, of book suppression. It was not difficult, when patient scribes laboriously copied manuscripts, to destroy "the falsely inscribed books of the impious", but with the invention of the printing-press a battle royal began. The genii had escaped from the bottle; and as he could not be enclosed again, it was thought necessary to shackle him with rules and decrees. As long ago as 1501, Pope Alexander VI issued a bull forbidding the printers in the provinces of Mentz, Cologne, Treves, and Magdeburg, from publishing any books without the license of the archbishops. The movement known as the Reformation brought with it a deluge of publications then regarded as heretical. The Sacred College of the Index, composed of cardinals and consulters, was created; and regulations, many in force today, were promulgated, dealing severely with those who disregarded the dictates of the censorship. The "Index

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Librorum Prohibitorum" appeared. In 1744, under Benedict XIV, it contained thousands of titles.

It may seem a far cry from the time when books thus negatived were the occasion of an *auto da fé*, with the body of the hapless author occasionally upon the pyre, to the present day, and yet much of the same spirit, if not the same practice, remains. "Most governments, whether civil or ecclesiastical", asserts the Encyclopædia Britannica, "have at all times, in one way or another, acted on the general principle that some control may or ought to exist over the literature circulated among those under their jurisdiction." The Catholic Dictionary states the case even more categorically. "Since the dawn of civilization", it says, "the perception of the influence of good or evil exerted by books has induced the authorities of every strongly constituted state to control their circulation." It would be both profitable and instructive, if space allowed, to go into the detail of the extent to which various governments have attempted to exercise this control. Briefly it may be said that France is the most liberal, little or no restriction being placed upon publications. England does not seem to have the fear of free writing and free speaking which is becoming more and more pronounced in this country. The United States, with a virtuous zeal which seems hypercritical to our foreign cousins and which is the outward evidence of the Puritanism in our blood, undertakes the guardianship not only of our morals but of our patriotism through the enactment of prohibitive laws.

The first question which naturally arises is, "Why should a book be suppressed?" The answer that it encounters the objection of one or more individuals is not wholly satisfactory. Who objects, and on what ground and by what right? Is the objector fallible or infallible, prejudiced or unprejudiced, foolish or wise?

In the cases of some volumes the validity of the objection is not to be questioned. These are the books which emanate from prurient minds, and do not present a single justifiable reason for their existence. They are vulgar and coarse and crude; are written with lascivious intent; are more animal than human in their characterizations; and are lacking even in the redeeming quality of literary merit. These books are the cocaine and heroin of literature; and, like these deleterious, habit-forming drugs, are surreptitiously produced and circulated because they ought not to exist. They can be relegated outside the pale without a moment's hesitation, just as Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" can be placed upon the shelves with perfect propriety. In between these two extremes, however, is a wide area occupied by debatable books. It is a field in which the moralist flourishes the avenging sword, not realizing that even the law recognizes many degrees of homicide and imposes the death penalty only upon one. Curiously enough, there seems to be much virtue in the kindly mantle of the years. The Catholic church, which is most rigid in its attitude toward books, tolerates the classical authors. We countenance the open sale of Rabelais and Boccaccio, Fielding and Sterne, Flaubert, Balzac and Maupassant, with all their coarseness, because their literary merit has defied suppression and has been apparently sanctified by age. They remind me of the ancient Pantheon, which is universally admitted to be a thing of beauty, despite the fact that its marble is full of flaws.

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The line of demarcation between the acceptable and the objectionable is difficult to draw. The author and the publisher may, in the best of faith and without a single ulterior motive, produce and submit their combined work to the judgment of the public. It may, in the minds of nine-tenths of its readers, be free from any taint; and yet it may be excluded from a public library. This is because the librarian is frequently the arbiter as to what shall and what shall not be placed upon the shelves. Most librarians cut the Gordian knot of responsibility concerning a book against which objection is raised by one or more persons, by simply stating that their limited funds do not permit its inclusion in their purchase list. This lack of funds is actually a chronic condition with the libraries; and being a good and sufficient reason, closes the door against further discussion, offers the line of least resistance, and is final.

Other librarians honestly and fairly seek to determine whether or not a book should be given their sanction. In the New York Public Library, for instance, where no fiction is purchased until after it has been read, the reading is not entrusted to a single individual. The judgment of three, and even five, qualified members of the staff or outside specialists is sought and in the event of a serious disagreement, reference is made to a Book Committee as the court of last resort. This committee is composed of a publisher, a lawyer, and a business man. Even with this broad treatment there is no hard and fast rule of determination. One book may be admitted today and another excluded tomorrow, when it would seem as if the rule of suppression ought to be applied to both, or else both given a clean bill of health. In small libraries the effect of the personal equation is still more pronounced, because in these institutions there is no committee and the decision of the librarian is absolute.

It has already been intimated that there is an effort to keep our patriotism, like our morals, free from contamination. The unrest throughout the world which has followed the world war has resulted in the production of a vast amount of literature calculated to inspire disregard for law and to incite disorder. As a nation, we are as blatantly patriotic as we are moral, and the strong hand of the government has been lifted against the books and pamphlets which seek to undermine our institutions. This fact supplies another angle to the discussion of the suppression of books. These publications are as heretical, from the patriotic point of view, as Voltaire's writings are to the religious. *Ergo,* they must not be read. The guardian angels of our libraries see to it that authors who, for instance, preach force as a remedy for economic evils, shall not come into contact through their works with the frequenters of their institutions. All books, however, which deal with governmental, sociological and economic problems are not so violent in their teachings. They are dangerous only in their novelty. Here again we find the librarian in a position where he must exercise his personal judgment as to admission or exclusion. If his opinions are dogmatic and fixed, his decision must necessarily be partial and arbitrary. In some libraries the problem is solved by dividing the institution into two parts. One, the reference library, accepts everything, even the most radical outburst, on the ground that it has historical value. Into the same library will be admitted the most erotic literature, for the

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reason that it represents a certain type of mentality and of civilization. The reference library is for the student, who must satisfy the authorities that he is really sincere in his work. The circulating library, which is in intimate relation with Tom, Dick, and Alice, is kept free from anything which has a possibly harmful slant. The man who would minister to a depraved nature or who would inflame his heart with anarchistic doctrines may be able, in some way or another, to satisfy his desires, but the public library can proudly and truthfully assert, "Thou canst not say I did it."

The question naturally arises as to the extent to which the suppression of books operates in preventing the spread of objectionable publications. It is often asserted that it is only necessary to throw a book into the courts in order to insure its universal sale. This is not true. There may be a demand for it from a certain class, but this class is happily restricted in numbers and few, if any, of its members belong to the regular book-buying public. Besides, no self-respecting publisher desires to have his reputation injured and his output questioned through public accusation. The charge is instantly exploited, and frequently tried, in the newspapers, no matter how flimsy may be its foundation; while the decision of the court, rendered after long delays, is very frequently ignored. No one can minimize the splendid work which is done by the Society for the Suppression of Vice in its efforts to suppress books which never ought to be published and which are plainly within the scope and meaning of the prohibitive laws; and there is little basis for criticism save a tendency to regard all books which are not absolutely innocuous as coming within its jurisdiction. Years ago very little was safe from its prosecution. The broadened spirit of the times, however, and the sane decisions of many judges have interfered with its inquisitorial program and there are less cases of alleged violations brought before the courts.

The purist may complain that this indicates deterioration of the moral fibre of the American people. The assumption is not well-founded. It is true that what was heterodox once is orthodox now, due to a point of view different from that entertained by our forefathers, but no one can doubt the prevalence of a popular regard for morals. The prohibition amendment is an evidence of advanced morality; but even before that amendment had been ratified, drunkenness, once so common, had come to be regarded as a degrading habit, was recognized everywhere as a bar to business success, and was almost universally taboo. Graft, which once flourished openly and flagrantly, must now be practised secretly and in constant fear of exposure and public condemnation. Illicit intercourse comes within the same category. The world is growing better, even if it is becoming more liberal, and the censors and suppressors of books are realizing that fact. We need less censorship and more teaching of simplicity and economy, as opposed to the wave of wanton luxury and extravagance which is sweeping over the country. We must forbid vicious books, of course; but even more we must impress upon parents the necessity of keeping alive the consciences of their children.

If it can be demonstrated that it is best to accept the judgment of a policeman as to the merits or demerits of a book, or of some librarian as to whether a book should be admitted to or excluded from a library, or to

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trust the zeal of a paid employee of a vice-hunting society as to whether a publisher shall be suddenly haled into court—the present system can continue unchanged, even though it leads us to smile when Oliver Optic is placed upon the prohibited list. We venture to suggest, however, that there is a less autocratic and more democratic method of procedure. Would it not be possible for a committee selected from among the citizens of a community to decide what is fit and proper for that community to read? The consensus of such a committee, representing all shades of religious, moral, and civic views, would certainly be more reliable and acceptable than the judgment of an individual. One objection may be properly urged. If the members of the committee were elected at the polls, politics might be injected into library control, a condition which now rarely obtains. The probability is, however, that as the positions would be purely honorary they would not become subject to party politics; and it is easy to imagine that each community would pride itself upon securing personnel of the highest type. If the people can be trusted to choose their president, their senators and representatives, their judges and their city officials, they certainly can be relied upon to select fit persons to supervise their literature. It would be interesting to see if such a method would secure a wider interchange of views and opinions—and a more accurate judgment—on the merits of a book.

It might be appropriate to say that there is an old proverb which is applicable to this discussion—*Honi soit qui mal y pense.* Evil which is evident to all eyes should and must be eradicated, but moral astigmatism is prone to see evil where none exists. This point, however, is foreign to the purpose of this letter. The fact to be emphasized is that we have a censorship which is always autocratic and frequently unintelligent and which is apt to exercise its authority without proper judgment. Perhaps the suggestion which I have made, and which I admit is not ideal, may lead others to express their views. I can anticipate much that will be said. Those who argue that popular government is a failure will oppose the committee plan; others, who think that we are on the highroad to perdition, will advocate even more drastic restrictions; the opponents of free speech will insist that already there is too much latitude of expression; and, finally, many will assert their honest belief that the question is not open to discussion. The very fact that these differences of opinion exist, and will undoubtedly be expressed, constitutes, to my mind, convincing evidence that the problem of censorship has not yet been rightly solved.

HENRY LITCHFIELD WEST

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FRANK L. PACKARD AND HIS MIRACLE MEN

BY ARTHUR GUITERMAN

WAIVING all those superlatives that have leaped unbidden to the tongues and pens of enraptured press agents, there is still no question that the film version of "The Miracle Man" has scored a tremendous success. Those interested in learning the measure of its success in terms of art and finance, are cordially referred to the advertising posters and circulars of the photoplay company that "presents" the picture. On these posters and other publicity sheets, he that runs may read in huge display letters the names of the marvelously talented producer of the film, and even the names of the capable players in the photoplay. The more curious and painstaking investigator may, with the aid of a powerful magnifying glass, discover some allusion to the fact that the whole stupendous triumph is based on a mere story by an equally mere author named Frank L. Packard. You see, all that this Frank L. Packard did was to conceive a striking dramatic idea and embody it in a narrative, portraying its scenes with a clarity that would leave even a continuity writer for the movies no excuse for going wrong. Obviously, the unique genius who directed the almost literal transference of the tale to the screen deserves practically all the credit, just as the marvelously imaginative stage manager who presents "Hamlet" to the senses of an audience, is entitled to far more glory than Shakespeare who did nothing but make ink-marks on paper. We are, in consequence, fully prepared for such suggestions as the following sent by the producing company to prospective exhibitors of the film:

> You can't go too strong on the name of George Loane Tucker.... For your people are going to know the name of George Loane Tucker after they see "The Miracle Man", as a producer whose work has no exact equals on the screen today. They are going to number him among the BIG MEN of the industry. Don't let them think that you were not alive to his true worth.
>
> Of course mention should be made of the picture's source. The original story was written by Frank L. Packard and this was subsequently the basis of George M. Cohan's play.
>
> But this only serves to illustrate our point made above with greater emphasis. Tucker's work, with respect to "The Miracle Man", outshines that of Cohan and of Packard. And when a motion-picture producer rises to these heights certain it is that his name should be used in every bit of publicity and advertising and exploitation without stint.

So, permitting that characeristic bit of impudence to blow its own brazen horn, let us,—as Sir Thomas Malory would say,—let us leave off speaking of the movies, and speak we awhile of Frank L. Packard, born story-weaver and selfmade writer, who never uses his middle name which happens to be "Lucius".

Our hero belongs, in a manner, on either side of the Canadian line; for while he was born in Montreal, he comes of old New England stock, transplanted, in the last generation,

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from Stoughton, Massachusetts. He was instructed in French and some other things in a French boarding school in his native city, and then studied at McGill University, from which institution he was graduated in 1897 with the degree of B. S. in electrical engineering. While at the university he was active in athletics, playing quarterback in football and cover-point in hockey. He also was accustomed to recite, long before their appearance in book form, the French-Canadian "habitant" ballads of Dr. William Henry Drummond, who was his personal friend. During summer vacations he worked in the shops of the Canadian Pacific Railway, there acquiring material and color for future railroad stories.

Having received his degree, he went to Belgium and took a year's post-graduate course in electricity at the University of Liège, where he improved his knowledge of French and the humanities; also, in the course of occasional wanderings in Belgium and France, he stored away more local color and valuable memories. On his return from Europe he entered the employ of a company manufacturing conduits for electric wires. During the two years spent with this company his work took him all over the United States with more or less protracted periods of residence in New York, Providence, Savannah, and New Orleans, and gave him an acquaintance with details of telegraphy that suggested many incidents in the stories published in the collection entitled "The Wire Devils".

All this time he was feeling the creative urge, but it is difficult to compose while on the wing. However, in 1902, he found a temporary perch in his ancestral town of Stoughton, Massachusetts, where he settled to establish a factory for the production of one of the commodities used in his father's business. Here he found enough leisure to begin his career as a writer.

Frank Packard is essentially a self-made author. Although a born teller of tales and full of enthusiasm, he did not plunge recklessly into the inkwell or dash wildly across white paper as most of us do. He set to work seriously to master the principles of his chosen craft in regular courses of study and practice. Life was not too strenuous in Stoughton, nor was business too engrossing. He had agreeable and quaintly interesting surroundings, a pleasant old farmhouse to potter about in,—and the stories began to take shape. There were, as usual, discouragements. The commodity, previously referred to, that he was at this time manufacturing, happened to be shoe-blacking; so certain of his friends inevitably gave him the title of "the literary bootblack"; but he bore up bravely even under this affliction, especially as the magazines were beginning to take notice.

The first of his stories to find its way into print was one based on a student prank at the University of Liège. Then followed the earliest of his Canadian railway tales; and he was greatly encouraged when "Collier's Weekly" accepted a bit of invention that reflected a Stoughton town-meeting.

Having sold the Stoughton factory, he experimented, briefly, with another venture that took him out to the Canadian Rockies, where he made the acquaintance (unofficially) of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, so indispensable to the fiction of that region. But the call of the ink-bottle was too strong. Giving up all business connections, he went to New York, mar-

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ried, settled down in the neighborhood of Washington Square, and spent a year writing fiction under contract for a publishing house that issued a string of magazines.

It was during this Philistine, but from a point of discipline, salutary period, that he was wont to say, smacking his lips in satisfaction: "Well, I did three thousand words today!"

At the expiration of his year of apprenticeship, feeling sufficiently sure of himself to set up as a wholly independent author, he returned to Montreal to work in his own chosen way. In 1912, with his wife, he started on a trip around the world, spending nearly a year in travel, partly for recreation and partly with the idea of gathering literary material. He visited South Africa, Australia, Samoa, Fiji, and Hawaii, returning by way of California. In Samoa he was made a chief under the name of "Tamafaiga"—but it is always possible that his native friends may have fooled him in regard to the real meaning of his title. He now lives, with his wife and two boys, in Lachine, a suburb of Montreal, on the shore of Lake St. Louis; and when he is not working may be found, according to season, canoeing, golfing, or curling, or,—if Bob Davis happens to drop in on him,—fishing.

Too often authors are either praised for qualities that they do not possess or are adversely criticized for wanting qualities to which they make no claim and that are by no means essential in their chosen field. Now Frank Packard isn't a Joseph Hergesheimer, nor an Arnold Bennett, nor a Joseph Conrad, but he is a decidedly effective Frank Packard. He is not—nor does he make any pretense of being—a profound psychologist; he is a born story-teller with a born story-teller's instinct for vivid incident, vigorous action, and dramatic or even melodramatic climax. But he is not merely a weaver of plots.

In his detective stories, it is true, he is concerned mainly to give his readers the indispensable thrill, and works to that end. Accordingly in "The Wire Devils" we find his detective hero, as elusive and nearly as bullet-proof as a shadow, repeatedly foiling the schemes of a gang of wire-tappers and thugs in spite of all the efforts of the miscreants and the minions of the law, both of whom believe him to be a master-criminal. In the "Jimmie Dale" stories we have essentially the same hero—this time a "millionaire clubman" of New York, known, in various disguises, to the baffled police and malevolent underworld as "the Gray Seal"—committing all sorts of innocuous and benevolent burglaries to the discomfiture and final annihilation of the most desperate bands of criminals. Of course, as in all tales of the character, it is borne upon the reflective reader that both police and criminals are wooden Indians to allow even a prodigy of ingenuity and invulnerability to repeat the same exploits with such frequency and impunity. But detective stories are not built for reflection. They are our modern fairy tales for adults, intended to engross, divert, and thrill; and "The Adventures of Jimmie Dale" as well as the adventures of that mysterious detective "the Hawk" in "The Wire Devils", amply fulfil that laudable purpose.

In his other stories and novels, however, Frank Packard is dominated by two themes—heroic self-sacrifice and moral regeneration.

Both of these themes are evident in his railroad stories of the Canadian Rockies, collected under the title of

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"The Night Operator". Here, against a scenic background of cliff and canyon, we have the adventures and misadventures of the workers of the "Hill Division"—engineer, wrecking boss, master mechanic, superintendent, telegrapher, aspiring train-boy, all-round failure, and the rest, with wrecks and near-wrecks enough to drive the most heedless traveler to apply for an insurance policy. And here are perils that call forth unflinching courage and devotion, and emergencies in which the man who is down and out, scorned and rejected, rises to splendid heights.

Again, in the novel "Greater Love Hath No Man", the hero, Varge, in order to save the life of his benefactress, takes upon himself the burden of a murder committed by her worthless son. This is carrying self-sacrifice to a dangerous extreme; but the story is told with characteristic sincerity and conviction.

But in Packard's four other novels, regeneration is the keynote. In "The Beloved Traitor" we have for hero a young fisherman of southern France who becomes the greatest sculptor of his time,—just like that. Spoiled by sudden success and unbounded adulation, he forgets the girl to whom he was solemnly betrothed; but in the end, abjuring selfish triumphs, he returns to his first love in renewed faith and simplicity, and to his art with a higher and purer inspiration.

In his latest book, "From Now On", Packard's hero serves a five-year prison sentence for the theft of a package containing $100,000 in bank bills which he has securely hidden against the day of his release. On regaining his liberty, although continually dogged and harassed by police and criminals, he gets possession of the booty for which he sacrificed his freedom; but the fine honesty of a friend and the devotion of the woman he loves, cause him to see a new light, and he restores the money to its rightful owners.

Still more ingenious in its plot is "The Sin That Was His", in which the candidate for regeneration is one Raymond Chapelle, the highly educated black sheep of a prominent French-Canadian family, known, when the story opens, as Three-Ace Artie, the gambler. Embittered against the world and without faith in God or man, Raymond, while on the outskirts of the little village of St. Marleau near the mouth of the St. Lawrence, is forced into an affray, the consequences of which seem to make his conviction on a false accusation of murder inevitable. It happens that a young priest, on his way to assume his duties as curé of St. Marleau, has been struck down and apparently killed by the falling bough of a tree. To insure his own escape the gambler assumes the priest's robes, clothing the unconscious man in his own garments. The young priest, identified as the supposed murderer and unexpectedly restored to life though with loss of memory, is eventually convicted and sentenced to death. Raymond, in the meantime, compelled for his own safety to act as curé, fulfils the duties of the office with such ability and seeming charity that he is widely known as "the good young Father Aubert". All the circumstances of his false position tend to stimulate his better instincts. To save the innocent priest he reveals the truth to the bishop of the diocese, and is himself saved by the confession of his false accuser. The plot is developed with a skill that gives the necessary plausibility to its coincidences, and a somewhat dangerous situation is presented

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without a touch of irreverence. The dramatic and pictorial qualities of the story will undoubtedly be doubly apparent in the photoplay version soon to be presented.

But of all the Packard stories, "The Miracle Man" has made the deepest impression. Appearing first in a magazine, this tale was next published in book form, then dramatized, then filmed, and, according to the latest reports, is to be reincarnated as an opera! The leading character, a New York confidence man, learns through a newspaper paragraph of an old faith healer, known as "the Patriarch", who is reputed to have worked wonderful cures among the people of the little Maine village of Needley where he has long lived. The confidence man, "Doc." Madison, elaborates a plot to exploit the Patriarch and his alleged powers for the benefit of himself and his associates. Going to Needley, he finds the Patriarch to be a benign old man of noble presence, deaf and dumb and rapidly becoming totally blind. Madison then secretly summons his accomplices to Needley and stages a sensational "cure" that is calculated to make the Maine village the Mecca of the afflicted, and its "shrine", the Patriarch's home, a source of incalculable revenue to the promoters of the enterprise. One of the crooks, known as "the Flopper", is a contortionist who has unusual powers of dislocation and distortion that enable him to give his whole body the appearance of frightful congenital deformity. In the presence of a throng of believers and skeptics, the Flopper crawls across the Patriarch's lawn, flings himself at the old man's feet, and—as the healer stretches out his hands above him—gradually drawing his limbs into their proper positions slowly rises, erect, and normal. But then, to the astonishment and even dismay of the conspirators, a little boy, crippled from his birth, flings away his crutch and runs across the lawn to the benignant Patriarch. After marvels of true healing such as this, the reform of the crooks, and eventually that of their cynical, but prepossessing chief, is only a matter of time and plot development.

Undoubtedly a strong element in the appeal of Frank Packard's stories lies in their presentation of this theme of regeneration, whether that regeneration be moral or physical; for there is in all human beings a desire to be better and finer than they are, so that the reader finds himself notably in sympathy with his fellow mortal of the printed page, blindly fighting his way toward something higher. Besides, Packard's heroes are all, in a degree, Miracle Men. They are all flawlessly and wonderfully strong, self-reliant, and humanly attractive; and even in their unredeemed state, though you may be given to understand that they are a bad lot, they never, on their errant path, forfeit your interest and good will by consummating anything really mean or injurious to the deserving. In brief, they are proper heroes of romance. Their creator has thoroughly convinced himself of their reality and also of the reality of their picturesque experiences, and their adventures and triumphs are accordingly set forth with a fervor and sincerity which is always engaging.

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A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

A CHRONICLE OF YOUTH BY YOUTH

By Margaret Emerson Bailey

JUST as the boiling pot gives off heat, so through youth and adolescence we give off calories of virtue." Since this, as Mr. Fitzgerald sees it, is the process of molten youth as it takes shape and hardens, his novel is less a history of its assumption of form than of its loss of radiance. Were this all, "This Side of Paradise" would contain little new. More tolerantly, certainly more humorously, the same process has been set forth by a score of English novelists. But though referred to still as "the younger group", they show by their very tolerance and humor that they have passed on, that their experiences have already become recollections. They are reviewing youth with a memory—not a sensation—of its joy and bitterness, and are looking back to its problems with a wistful patronage. Mr. Fitzgerald, in contrast, gives the impression of being still in the thick of the fight, and of having the fierceness of combat. The dust of conflict is still in his eyes and he does not even see very clearly. At times he cannot distinguish youth's friend from its foe or perceive where it has met with defeat and where conquered. The battle is on and the besetting forces loom very large. They take shape allegorically; it is their exaggeration and the very solemnity with which they are viewed that give the book value, for they make it a record at the very moment of the encounter.

Amory Blaine, the hero of this tale, starts life with a handicap. "From his mother he inherits every trait except the inexpressible few which make him worth while." An exotic she may no longer be called, for in novels her species has become indigenous to the Middle West and is constantly culled there whenever costly and poisonous beauty is needed to color the page. Unfortunately for her son, whose coming she had looked upon as a burden, she finds him a source of diversion and takes delight in the precocity developed by her companionship. Had it not been for his heritage from his father, the calories of his virtue must have been multitudinous to have held out. As it is, the worst that she does for him is to cut him off from his kind and from a normal boy's "roughing it", to make him acutely conscious of his good looks, and to give him a snobbish belief in himself as a personage reserved for special adventure. But once she has worked what havoc she may, she drops him with a swiftness amazing even in a person of her fleeting interest, and he is left to the leveling process of school and college. From both as well as from the war, he emerges with mind awakened and consequently with a lessened conceit, save where it is concerned in the

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amourettes which lead up to the tragedy, so splendidly black, of the lost Rosalind. It is in relation to these that the author sets himself the task of the social historian, presenting society in its mad reaction to war. For the hero does not need to go to the underworld in his quest for excitement. The débutante of old days, the Victorian "virginal doll", has been transformed to the "baby vamp", who if she is too hard-headed to follow in morals the Queens of the Movies, has at least adopted their manners. Against her, Amory hasn't a chance. And when to disillusionment is added the loss of money and of his friends who are pushed out of the story in a way to which no vigorous characters would submit, he goes down like Brian de Bois Guilbert, "the victim of contending passions". One would think in such a moment that it would be small comfort to "know one's self", though it is with that triumphant if unconvincing protestation that the book closes.

Such a summary is undoubtedly too hard on the book, for it overstresses its failure to arouse sympathy. It also fails to take into account passages, sometimes whole chapters, of brilliant cleverness—those for example where the author takes a fling at modern literary movements or satirizes the already jaded débutante as she makes her curtsy to the world. Little, moreover, does Mr. Fitzgerald care for the conventions of form; and there is something very taking in the nonchalance with which he passes from straight narrative to letters, poems, or dramatic episodes. Quite as wilful is his style. But in all its affectations, its cleverness, its occasional beauty, even its sometimes intentioned vulgarity and ensuing timidity, it so unites with the matter as to make the book a convincing chronicle of youth by youth.

This Side of Paradise. By F. Scott Fitzgerald. Charles Scribner's Sons.

MORE PLAYS BY GEORGE MIDDLETON

By Richard Burton

IT is one of the significant and encouraging things in the modern theatre, that a man like Mr. Middleton can do work that is commercially popular, yet also write plays that plainly belong to the tendency toward a serious theatre,—the theatre made possible by an Ibsen, a Brieux, a Maeterlinck, and a Shaw. It is in this way that I regard Mr. Middleton's dramatic writing as truly symptomatic. On the one hand, he can collaborate with Mr. Bolton in stage successes like "Polly With A Past" and "Adam and Eva"—to mention only two recent favorites—and on the other, can turn out his succession of published volumes of plays in one act or longer, of which "Masks" is the sixth. These volumes have doubtless assisted the vogue of this new form in the United States, and won the author deserved critical praise.

These plays may seem primarily to appeal as reading drama; but for years they have been given presentation in our Little Theatres, and in the hands of intelligent amateurs, and so been kept alive and had their influence as thoughtful experiments in the drama which desires to gain attention as earnest, honest comment upon our contemporary social scene. They have served to make the writer's name hon-

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orably known in those circles where something besides commercial theatre tests obtains; they justify the hope that some day their author, still a young man, may dare to say his full say in some drama which shall at the same time hold general public attention in a theatre and yet illustrate serious psychology.

The present volume not only maintains the high level of those preceding, but contains some work that challenges comparison with anything done earlier, while suggesting a new vein. This is particularly true of the title-piece, in which it is impossible not to find a certain autobiographical flavor. The idea of the dramatist who first writes to please himself a biting satiric drama which cannot win stage acceptance and then follows it with a modification of the same play which is a box-office triumph,—to be confronted by two of his own characters who attack him for dishonestly warping them in the interests of success,—strikingly brings out the whole conflict between livelihood, life, and artistic ideals, and has a bitter tang to its compelling grip. The author's instinct in placing it first is right.

Strong, too, in its subtle inner way is "Jim's Beast", with its implied lesson on the dangers and difficulties of the philander's path—male or female. The comment furnished by the scrub-woman is full of an enjoyable humor relieving the tension of the situation. Of the remaining four, "Tides" is the best: a sincere, penetrating comment upon the effect of the war on three persons of a typical American family today. In sheer subtlety of handling, and richness of suggestion in the study of interwoven sex relations, the play called "The Reason" should also be emphasized. Its value comes out all the more in a rereading. "Among The Lions" and "The House" are slighter, less important, but the latter is a pleasant pendant to the foregoing dramas in its picture of seasoned married happiness, and here, as so often before, Mr. Middleton reveals himself as the acute, fair-minded, and skilful student of modern psychology as it is exhibited in the family.

In all the six plays, the trained hand of the practical theatre artist is evidenced in the stage directions and the conductment of the action; a feeling for scene, for character, and for the climax which is the necessary evolution of the development can be detected in each and all. One feels that these little cross-sections of life not only read well, but will also act well. A sense of "curtain" is never absent. Mr. Middleton has long since acquired a technique which gives one a comfortable assurance of right handling and economy of resource. Of his work it can be said that it is at once literary, and practical stage material; this is as it should be. Both by gift and diligence he has made himself an *homme du théâtre;* he should be welcomed by readers of sound drama, and acted by both amateurs and professionals of the playhouse.

Masks, and Other One Act Plays. By George Middleton. Henry Holt and Co.

BOYS AND ELLIS PARKER BUTLER

By Gertrude M. Purcell

LIFE was never dull in Riverbank, the little town on the Mississippi where lived and fought, fished and swam, a glorious triumvirate: Swatty, the leader, who knew how to "push a

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feller's nose into his face when he has him down and he don't say what Swatty wants him to say"; Bony, who "was all right, but never started to do things—he just went along when we did them and waited on the outside of the fence"; and George, himself, the chronicler of their Homeric exploits.

The saga of "Swatty" begins with a hairbreadth escape on the Mississippi when the river was at its height, and recounts in bewildering succession a terrific sawmill blaze, a near drowning, a siege in a cave by the Graveyard Gang, an imprisonment in a haunted house, illicit rifle practice, a feud with Slim Finnegan, who "would just as soon stab you as not", and the rescue of Bony's father on the river, when a thaw set in and the ice began to move.

In addition to this amazing list of activities, Swatty and Bony and George, like all boys in life and in fiction, had a secret society. It was known as The Red Avengers, and its aim was summary incendiarism of inimical homes and property. Unfortunately, a barn did burn down, with their scribbled warnings stuck on the door, and things would have gone hard with the desperadoes had not rescue come from Swatty's lawyer brother Herb. This brings us to the romance that runs through the book,—Herb's somewhat intermittent courtship of George's sister Fan. Reports on its progress or temporary cessation are made in true young brother fashion, as: "It looked as if it wouldn't be long before Herb and Fan got married, because they hadn't fought for a long while and Fan was embroidering towels day and night."

A story of boy-life on the Mississippi brings the inevitable comparison with the immortal Huck, and were it not for a lamentable lapse into sentimentality out of keeping with the rest of the book, "Swatty" would be a worthy successor. A boy like George would never in this wide world possess a grandmother addressed as "Ladylove", and if he did, he would be cut into small pieces before he would use so soft an appellation.

With the exception of this fantastic and utterly unbelievable old lady, "Swatty" is a book to be enjoyed heartily by boys of any age.

Swatty. By Ellis Parker Butler. Houghton Mifflin Co.

PROSE IN THE GREAT TRADITION

By John Bunker

THERE are writers, and again writers. Some—such as police reporters, historians, book reviewers, compilers of text-books, and even popular novelists—give us facts, or what they suppose to be facts, and their writing is full of the spirit of knowledge. We come from them laden and informed, and if we feel also heavy and sad and old and forlorn, there are few to tell us the reason. But there is an older and profounder spirit, the spirit of wisdom, and occasionally a writer appears who gives us not facts, not information, not knowledge, but a moving interpretation of this mysterious world in which we find ourselves. He may write of such simple things as children or the hills or ships or great cities or old books or the sea, and though he may tell us nothing new about these matters, there is something in his words, at once strange and familiar, that speaks to us and moves us and fills us with a great joy and an abiding wonder.

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If the reader should pick up a book called "Old Junk" by a writer named H. M. Tomlinson, it is well to warn him in advance that it will not tell him the length of the equator, nor the distance of the nearest fixed star, nor even the faults—or merits—of the Treaty of Versailles. Neither let him be disappointed if he finds therein no blaring rhetoric or feeble humor or commonplace moralizing or tinsel cleverness or arbitrary assertion or shallow sentiment or any of the other numerous evils of our day that are a weariness to the flesh and a trial to the spirit. Here is a writer who would as soon think of discharging a pistol at your ear as of firing off a paradox, and would no more write a craggy sentence than he would steal the spoons from the table.

The author of "Old Junk" has his moods—he can be solemn enough on occasion, and, when he will, amusing; but he is never loud or common, never trivial or flippant or mean. He approaches life too reverently—and therefore too wisely—for that, and his gentleness is the mark not of weakness but of strength. Everywhere is a fluid music, a poised and deliberate and yet flexible art. It all comes, we suppose, from the fact that Mr. Tomlinson is penetrated with the old sense of "the tears in things"—he is sensitive to change, and has that fine melancholy induced by the frail beauty and wistful transience of earth and man and the works of man.

And who is this unusual person?—and what does he write about? Well, he is an Englishman—presumably beyond forty—who for the last two decades has been contributing occasional articles to London newspapers and doing the harsh work of daily journalism. During the war he served as a correspondent in France, but he was an extraordinary sort of war correspondent, as a reference to the several war papers at the end of this book will show. He has published only one book previous to the present, "The Sea and the Jungle", which he calls merely "an honest book of travel" but which Mr. S. K. Ratcliffe (who contributes the foreword to the present book) observes is such "in a degree so eminent, one is tempted to say that an honest book of travel, when so conceived and executed, must surely count among the noblest works of the literary artist".

"Old Junk" differs from its predecessor in that it consists of a number of detached papers, papers written at intervals during the last ten years and ranging from "The African Coast" to "Lent, 1918", with "Bed-Books and Night Lights", "The Lascar's Walking-Stick", "The Art of Writing", "The Sou'-Wester", and others in between; nor are we to forget those several admirable chapters devoted to the sea and ships and the men who sail them. One opens this book at random and finds sentences, paragraphs, whole pages that are at once a delight and a despair: a delight because they are—well, delightful; and a despair because, peer as you may, you cannot discover the secret of their making. To select for quotation is a perplexing business, but this is the final paragraph of the book:

> The wind and rain have passed. There is now but the icy stillness and quiet of outer space. The earth is Limbo, the penumbra of a dark and partial recollection; the shadow, vague and dawnless, over a vast stage from which the consequential pageant has gone, and is almost forgotten, the memory of many events merged now into formless night itself, and foundered profoundly beneath the glacial brilliance of a clear heaven alive with stars. Only the stars live, and only the stars overlook the place that was ours. The war—was there a war? It must have been long ago. Perhaps the shades are troubled with vestiges of an

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old and dreadful sin. If once there were men who heard certain words and became spell-bound, and in the impulse of that madness forgot that their earth was good, but very brief, and turned from their children and women and the cherished work of their hands to slay each other and destroy their communities, it all happened just as the leaves of an autumn that is gone once fell before the sudden mania of a wind, and are resolved. What year was that? The leaves of an autumn that is long past are beyond time. The night is their place, and only the unknowing stars look down to the little blot of midnight which was us, and our pride, and our wisdom, and our heroics.

Here is a prose rich and solemn and majestic and, we think, enduring.

Old Junk. By H. M. Tomlinson. Alfred A. Knopf.

BALLADS OF OLD NEW YORK

By Wilton A. Barrett

IN an earlier book, "The Laughing Muse", notably in some verses having to do with prehistoric beasts, Mr. Guiterman made rhymes for the like of which, in their sportive ring and virtue of parody, one might go clear back to Bret Harte and his "To the Pliocene Skull" and "A Geological Madrigal". The invention displayed in that book cannot be repeated at will, but in Mr. Guiterman's latest collection, "Ballads of Old New York", the skill is still there and also a generous proportion of humor conveyed by a naïveté always in control. Aside from the lyrics which appear as interludes and a few more serious-natured selections, he has provided the atmosphere and characters for a Gilbertian opera—there would be the burlesque six of the Rattle-Watch, Manhattan's original police force, and also those forefathers of the town who, called into solemn council as to how Pearl Street should be appropriately paved, a fortnight wandered up and down its length debating and eating oysters until the shells they cast away furnished an excellent pavement along all the preordained and crooked path the community's cows had already trodden out.

Appoint a committee to dally and doubt
And somehow the matter will work itself out,—

the argument wisely concludes.

As a contribution to the Knickerbocker story-chest the book should be welcome; it definitely creates a golden mid-morning where large-paunched gentlemen in buckled shoes sit before tap-room doors and confab at length upon sundry weighty ways and means, drawing the while leisurely clouds from the black cavities of Dutch pipes; it is all done to that tinkle of rhyme and prancing cadence that have made Mr. Guiterman notorious as a gay rider in the light lists of contemporary verse; it must be seen at once that such pieces as "Dutchman's Breeches" and "The Legend of the Bronx" are wholly adroit and amusing.

The book is a happy book, done by a genuine lover and historian of the greatest city in the New World. Washington Irving would have liked it, and those of the inhabitants of Gramercy Park who read verse should like it. For the East and West sides, Harlem and the Bronx, it should not have the same affiliations, despite Mr. Guiterman's professing to see a connection, other than purely historical, between our fair city's Knickerbocker past and its indecorous present in which all the blue stockings are boiling in the same kettle with the other socks. The truth is, the more single and genuine affinity lurking in Mr. Guiterman is with the past; there is a certain regret in his book that the

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sails of the Dutchman are no longer seen on the Tappan Zee and that the burgher's tread resounds no longer in the highways of New Amsterdam. From this feeling in him a poetic image is now and then reflected, something is glimpsed, that makes one ask if there is not something more important in his book than its cleverness. Hudson's ship being at anchor the first time in New York bay,—

> The Red Men in their shallops came and stroked her salty sides.

Rambout Van Dam rows across the Tappan Zee to

> The rhythmic rullock-clank and drip
> Of even-rolling oars.
>
> A moon is closed in Hudson's breast
> And lanterns gem the town.

One suspects that its light is still closed in Mr. Guiterman's heart and that it is by it he sees to hang these lanterns in his verse; that in this wise, once looking, perhaps, at a member of the Traffic Squad, he did not see a modern policeman, but beheld,—

> Musket on shoulder and dirk on thigh,
> Forth from the fort, with a soulful sigh,
> Wiping their lips of a parting dram,
> Sally the Watch of New Amsterdam.

Ballads of Old New York. By Arthur Guiterman. Harper and Bros.

THE DOVER PATROL

By C. C. Gill

Commander, U. S. Navy

IN the war on the sea, Admiral Bacon's Dover Patrol was like a first-line trench. This force, moreover, stationed at the North Sea entrance to the Channel, protected essential sea communications of the Allied armies along the northern front, and at the same time guarded England's main trade routes to London. "Communications" lie at the root of strategy, and control of the Narrow Seas was the key to the British Isles. Could Germany have turned this key she would have won the war.

The enemy advance against the Channel ports was good strategy. In September, 1914, had the German General Staff but known it, the Channel Line of Communications was the Achilles's heel of the Entente cause. The occupation of Zeebrugge and Ostend by the Kaiser's army was the Napoleonic pointing of the pistol at the head of England. Admiral Bacon in his book emphasizes this threat, and at the time many military experts in Great Britain dwelt upon the gravity of the situation.

These are considerations that give Admiral Bacon's book a high professional and historical value. The author writes from first-hand knowledge; he commanded the Dover Patrol during the three critical years of 1915-16-17. The book not only tells deeds of daring and achievement, but also gives reasons and motives; romance and anecdote are interspersed with philosophy. The narrative ranges from hand to hand fighting in boarding encounters between charging destroyers, to highly scientific long-range bombardments by heavy ordnance.

Admiral Bacon was well qualified to cope with the naval conditions which faced him at Dover. He entered the navy in 1877, commanded the first dreadnought, was first Chief of Staff of the New Home Fleet, performed active duty with the early submarines, and was closely associated with developments in gunnery. And now he has written a book interesting to both seafaring and shoregoing readers, re-

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markable for its clearness and readability.

The Dover Patrol force consisted of twenty-four different types of vessels totaling in all about four hundred, and including monitors, cruisers, destroyers, submarines, drifters, trawlers, mine sweepers, motor boats, motor launches, and air craft. The Admiral's narrative is one of ceaseless watch and ward with almost continual fighting. It covers a great variety of naval activities both afloat and ashore: "tip and run" destroyer engagements; "shoot and scoot" raiding tactics; anti-submarine net work of all descriptions; escort and convoy duty; mine-laying and mine-sweeping. Various uses of submarines are described, such as creeping along the bottom for mine cables and advancing under the enemy's nose to take tidal observations or to get other information. We are told how British "subs" fooled the enemy by a camouflage of occulting lights to make them resemble light buoys while lying at moorings ready to launch a torpedo. There is an account of a German scientific success in exploding an electrically controlled automatic boat against the monitor "Erebus". Also shooting a zareba of explosive nets by drifters is explained, and many other curious weapons and tactics.

Broadly speaking the mission of the Dover Patrol was threefold—first, to protect the trade routes passing through the Straits; second, to safeguard the cross-channel transport line; and third, to support the left flank of the Allied army.

Admiral Bacon says that his chief concern was the protection of traffic in the Downs, a roadstead anchorage off the southeast end of England which was a great terminal of shipping. All vessels, British, Allied, or neutral, passing the Straits, whether bound for England or foreign ports, were examined here. This service dealt with no less than 121,707 vessels. Being only ninety miles from Ostend, its protection was a heavy responsibility on the shoulders of the Admiral at Dover. It seems almost incredible that the losses to this shipping were only 1/25 of 1% by mines and 1/1000 of 1% by enemy night raids. This record constitutes a monument to the genius of the Commander-in-Chief and to the ability of those serving under his orders.

The second and no less important duty of the Dover Patrol was to safeguard the cross-channel, army-transport service, and in this even greater success was attained than in protecting merchant traffic. By careful planning and tireless devotion this naval force up to the end of December, 1917, transported 5,614,500 troops without the loss of a single man. All this within three steaming hours of the enemy advance submarine base at Ostend. In addition, during the three years 1915-16-17, arrivals and departures of store-carriers, troop transports, and ambulance transports at Dover numbered over 14,800. Of sick and wounded 810,000 were disembarked. The only casualty was the mining of the hospital ship "Anglia" while under the Red Cross.

And what was the enemy doing all this time? He was not idle. The Dover Patrol did not gain its record without a heavy toll of ships and brave lives. The pages telling of these are full of adventure. It seems that the Germans had open to them five general methods of attack. All of these were forestalled by the British Navy with the result that the enemy attempted only three of them and all the attacks made were defeated. In

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brief these five methods were: (1) daylight raids in force; (2) destroyer raids in low visibility weather conditions; (3) destroyer raids at night; (4) submarine attacks; (5) mine-laying.

In 1916 the German submarine mine-layers became so active that Admiral Bacon boldly decided to place a blocking mine barrage off the coast of Ostend and Zeebrugge. This looked like an extremely difficult and hazardous operation, but it worked out with great success. It required monitors on patrol by day to keep the Germans from sweeping up the mines and to protect the drifters and trawlers engaged daily in repairing and perfecting the barrage. Destroyers were necessary to assist and to screen the monitors from submarine attack. The guns of the monitors protected the small craft from cruiser attack, while the destroyers and the mine fields safeguarded the monitors from U-boat torpedoes. At night the monitors were relieved by British submarines which patrolled and guarded the barrage during the dark hours.

In addition to safeguarding the trade routes and cross-channel army transports Admiral Bacon was also charged with protecting the left flank of the army from a landing in the rear. Long-range bombardment by the monitors against Zeebrugge, Ostend, and the German batteries are fully described. It is not generally appreciated that as a result of these bombardments Ostend was made so hot, the enemy finally had to abandon it as a permanent submarine base.

Landing and mounting high-power naval guns to support the army is explained in detail. We are also told about the plans made to mount a giant eighteen-inch gun camouflaged by the Palace Hotel at Westend. This was to bombard Bruges. The armistice arrived, however, before this could be accomplished.

As a question of strategy one of the most interesting parts of the book is that dealing with the plans drawn for a joint Army and Navy effort to turn the enemy out of his Belgian bases. This was to have been an attack by land and sea. Admiral Bacon explains that the failure of the Flanders offensive in the fall of 1917 led to the abandonment of this surprise landing on the Ostend coast, which, in itself, involved only one division of troops and was a subsidiary operation. The preparations, however, had been completed to the last detail even to rehearsals. Two huge piers had been rigged to be shoved by monitors against the enemy sea wall. Over these piers, tanks followed by infantry, machine guns, and artillery were to make a surprise attack at dawn. The author even goes so far as to sketch an imaginary battle carried out in accordance with these plans.

From the beginning of the war control of the Narrow Seas was essential to the Allies. It is interesting to speculate what a major operation against the Belgian coast on the scale of the Dardanelles expedition might have effected.

To naval men the chapter on "Operations" is a gold mine of information. Herein the author explains clearly and at length the underlying principles, the reasoning, and the experimentation followed in arriving at practical methods. This is a chapter of lessons evolved from study and experience. The success of the Dover Patrol, in a new kind of naval warfare, fought under unusual handicaps of wind, sea, tides, currents, rocks and shoals, gives these lessons an authori-

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tative backing which commands attention and respect.

At the end of 1917 Admiral Bacon was suddenly relieved of his command, although by this time plans for 1918 had been laid including those for a naval attack on Zeebrugge and Ostend. The author's bitter disappointment in being deprived of the opportunity to carry out these plans can be understood. In reading this controversial part of the book, it should be remembered that there are two sides to every question and in these pages only one side is presented. But disregarding the issues raised as to what might have happened, the record of the Dover Patrol as it stands for 1915-16-17 is a proud one of brilliant achievement. Sailors the world over will render honor where honor is due and a full measure will be accorded to the Patrol and its distinguished commander, Admiral Sir Reginald Bacon.

The Dover Patrol. By Admiral Sir Reginald Bacon. Two volumes. George H. Doran Company.

A BATTLE OF PICTURES

By Walter Jack Duncan

MR. GALLATIN, in "Art and the Great War", offers the public three excellent things, none of which his title suggests. They are, namely, a digest of the proceedings of the Bureau of Pictorial Publicity, praise of England, and a personal grievance. The two former, it must be admitted, do not promise much for the general reader, but a personal grievance rouses our interest. Pain is fecund, it quickens genius; a sense of injury, of bitter wrong, frequently discovers a voice in the most taciturn of souls. But here again, as in his title, Mr. Gallatin disappoints us. He is not taciturn, and he is no genius. His sufferings, I suspect, are not genuine. If he complains, he complains conventionally, and that is never the way with those whose natures are deeply moved.

To fuss and fume over art and artists, however, or to seem to do so, is an incident in the growth of a refined society; it is a symptom of cultivation not peculiar to Mr. Gallatin alone. To accuse artists and public in turn of deplorable ignorance, and to volunteer to correct them,—when was this not the occupation of the idle, those precious few who, not knowing how better to employ their leisure, have made the artists' business their own?

Art, like the Church, is liberal, its portals are always open. A sanctuary for serious men, those with a vocation, it also offers asylum to the weak and the destitute, poor wretches who seek refuge from the storm. Occasionally one of these, expanding in such generous company, forgets he is living on the charity of his brothers; he is not content with a bone and a seat by the fire. He aspires to take over the Management! Mr. Gallatin, I regret to say, is guilty of this presumption. Harbored by this amiable community, he elects himself Abbot, he would assume charge of the order. As we examine his volume, recently published, we may judge how well he succeeds.

But let us do him no injustice. For one thing, Mr. Gallatin served his country with distinction throughout the war. At the first call to arms he enlisted as Chairman of the Committee on Exhibitions, Division of Pictorial Publicity, United States Government Committee on Public Information,—a position he maintained till the close of hostilities. Whatever his duties may have been as a committee-

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man, no one who reads his book will fancy he mistook his calling. Expert, informed, exact, his style—impressive and formal—reads for the most part indeed like the minutes of a quarterly meeting. You recognize at once the utterance of one who, speaking with authority, has much to record, and nothing to say.

Beginning with the inception and organization of the Division of Pictorial Publicity, Mr. Gallatin describes its function, records its meetings, details its activities, chronicles its successes, laments its vicissitudes, arraigns the government, praises or blames the artists, reviews their performance, inscribes names and dates, congratulates his confrères, neglects nothing and forgets nobody with a zeal and scrupulosity which, in the end, excites the reader's genuine interest and concern. Nothing Mr. Gallatin's department has done, no detail that has occupied him so long, is omitted from his inventory. Wanting the artist's intelligence, and unable to select and arrange his material, he seems to offer us the documents; he cannot use them.

But it is useless. It is worse,—it is superfluous in a subject which relates entirely to publicity; for what, I ask you, is publicity good for if it cannot speak for itself? Like fame, it needs no comment, and wants no monument. With a genius for the opportune and careless of the future, publicity lives in the present, it triumphs for an hour. It leads a short life but a merry one. True, its philosophy may not appeal to one like Mr. Gallatin whose hopes are set on immortality, but to me it seems to comprehend life admirably. Would that he were as full of joy and forgetfulness!

Now we might forgive Mr. Gallatin for introducing the subject of pictorial publicity into a discussion on art and the war if he had done it appropriately, and not at the expense of what really attracts us to his book and is deserving of so much greater consideration. Did not he himself say in his preface: "The purpose of this book has been to chronicle the part played in the Great War by painters, illustrators, etchers, lithographers and sculptors"? "The whole civilized world owes thanks to the artists of America", so his book begins. "Future history would be incomplete without adequate recognition of the mighty concrete values which the artists wrung from the fabrics of their dreams, and devoted to the rescue of humanity from further bloodshed and sacrifice." You see, in approaching his subject even Mr. Gallatin can become rhapsodical! But his happiness, like ours, is brief. The cares of a committeeman soon overwhelm him. They are indeed onerous. Everything goes wrong. The government neglects his advice, the artists heed not his direction. It makes him "sad", as he says. So he writes to the newspapers; he writes to the President! Nothing results. Nothing relieves the gloom till he comes to contemplate England. England shines!

"The greatest possible credit is due England and her Colonies", he exclaims, "for the splendid manner in which they went about obtaining pictorial records of the war. They covered all phases of the war in a most thoroughgoing and masterly fashion." All that they did was wise, able, energetic, and complete. Compared with England "France was left far behind, and the United States is nowhere at all". Consequently they are briefly dismissed. Other countries pass unmentioned. Thus does Mr. Gallatin

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make short work of "Art and the Great War".

Well, we are astonished! We will concede the excellence of England and her colonies, and we will take no exception to an American disparaging America. This is a free country. But is it indeed possible, we ask ourselves, can it be that Mr. Gallatin, who sets himself to write a book on the subject, knows nothing of the excellent and abundant work the artists of France have done and are doing as a result of the war? Except for their posters, he virtually ignores them. Truly, this is a scurvy way to treat a nation so civilized and courteous, and so famed for art and war! And in a volume that advertises itself with so comprehensive a title as Mr. Gallatin's, we might reasonably expect to be enlightened on the efforts of the enemy countries as well as those of the Allies. If this world war, as Mr. Gallatin intimates, was largely a battle of pictures, just what were the artists of the Central Powers doing all this time to defend themselves, we would like to know?

To quite disregard the Germans, whose war pictures compare favorably with those of any of the nations at war, only serves them right, I suppose. But brave little Italy,—modest, unassuming, patient mother of the Renaissance!—why should we who refuse her Fiume deny her a word on her share in war art? This is no way, surely, to consider the subject of art and the Great War. Again, just what mighty concrete values the artists of Russia "wrung from the fabrics of their dreams" (if indeed they wrung any), rescued humanity is left to conjecture. So it is with Belgium, and Serbia, and Rumania, to mention no others; nor is it otherwise with those countries not involved in the war but whose art showed some of its influence: on all these subjects, proper to his treatise, our historian remains mysteriously silent.

I do not say this silence is due to ignorance; I attribute it to kindness. I firmly believe Mr. Gallatin knows thoroughly all that has been done in art and the Great War; I suspect he has been grievously disappointed in the general result, and out of charity, is disposed to say nothing. I am sure I have the secret of this disappointment. May I offer it?—but strictly between ourselves?

As I conceive it, Mr. Gallatin is of an open, trusting nature, one that hopes for the best. Out of the innocence of his heart he expected great things of the war, he thought it would work a wondrous and immediate change in art and artists,—he was even prepared for miracles! One might be inclined to smile at his naïveté, if all were not concerned in it. For all of us, in a way, and while the war lasted, were victims of the same fallacious hopes. In our misery we flattered ourselves that war was the chastening rod, the fire that purifies; the pains the world suffered we concluded were labor-pains, we fondly imagined we were about to bear witness to the world's rebirth. Henceforth men were to reform their ways—they would be good husbands and fathers, poets would be no longer "decadent", painters would return to nature, authors would write like Dickens and Thackeray, and the Golden (or at least the Victorian) Age would be restored again. It occurred to nobody to think that, as before the war human affairs were a mixture of good and bad, so after the world would pursue its ordinary way, and remain mediocre.

Least of all are artists altered by events. They live apart from the

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world. And though its outward forms may change, the spirit of humanity remains the same; its ideal in war is truth, and in peace the beautiful. At one with this spirit and permeated by it, artists move secure and undisturbed through troublous ways. Indeed, art is the only immutable thing in nature. That is why we worship it. While ordinary men waste their talents giving expression to transient affairs, artists, true to their nature, are merely intent on expressing themselves. See, for instance, how Mr. Pennell, in the illustrations Mr. Gallatin lays before us, remains unaffected by the confusion about him, finding in it only excuse to continue picturing the "wonder of work". Steinlen is another example. Steinlen replaces his chimneys of the Paris suburbs by some smoking ruins, before which troop "refugees" that were lately his suffering masses of the *faubourgs*, and this is his contribution to war. I do not reproach him for this. On the contrary. For if he has nothing new to offer, truth is as old as the hills; he discovers in war what was familiar to him in ordinary life, and the justness of his vision is confirmed.

Even in the army itself the artist found what was familiar to him, where essentially life went on as usual though garbed in a uniform. Men rose and went to bed, they ate and they drank, they worked and they played, they fought and made love, complained and were happy. Whether he inclined to "landscape" or the "figure", "genre" painting or the historical,—even if he were a "comic" artist,—he had ample material to choose from, and could work according to his custom. Chardin himself, in this miniature world, would have found as much to do as Detaille or de Neuville; for cutting throats and blowing out of brains, I have been told, is but a small part of the life of a soldier. However, as we always associate the theatrical with our idea of war, nothing will ever quite satisfy us in a war picture but scenes of blood and carnage.

In this respect, the work of the artists as represented in Mr. Gallatin's book does not satisfy. To tell the truth, it strikes us as "tame",—there is no other name for it. Mr. Gallatin complains of this. It is not war as he imagines it. No, decidedly not! And there, I fancy, is the explanation of the difficulty.

To the eternal credit of the artists be it spoken, they did not go to France to "imagine" the war! Nor once there, did they pander to the taste of those at home who craved sensation. Truth was their concern, not propaganda. And the truths they tell us, the facts of war as here presented, should prove instructive. In a modest and grateful spirit then let us who stayed at home receive them. Above all, let us not make ourselves ridiculous. For if we send an expedition of trained men, at the peril of their lives, into the jungle for specimens, what would be more absurd than to complain, when the first shipment arrives, that the lion doesn't roar loud enough, that the elephant isn't big as a house, and, worst of all, that there isn't a hippogrif or a unicorn in the collection!

Art and the Great War. By Albert Eugene Gallatin. E. P. Dutton and Co.

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VACATION READING

BY ANNIE CARROLL MOORE

I'M not going to read a single book all summer!" The boy of sixteen who made this announcement in the summer of 1917 was driving a spirited horse over one of those willow-fringed roads which lead back from the New Hampshire coast through a lovely inland country. "You see", he continued, after waiting in vain for expostulation or comment, "I've already read three books from that old list (a long list furnished by one of the large preparatory schools of the country) and I don't have to read more than three."

"Don't you by any chance want to read a book that is not on the list?" I inquired. "No, I don't think of any. If I should *come across* another book as good as 'Ivanhoe' I'd read it. I read 'Ivanhoe' four times before I ever saw it on a list. When I called for another, just as good, father handed me 'Quentin Durward' and 'The Talisman', but I couldn't get interested in either of them. Anyway I'm sick of looking at print. Can you stand a road full of thank-you-ma'ams?" I could and did. Books were forgotten in the enchantment of that wood-road nor did we speak of them again during a week of perfect June weather, for I too have been often "sick of looking at print", and quite content as child and grown-up to go on from one vacation day to another without opening a book until one day I chance to come upon something I can't resist.

On such a day—a morning in early June—I had been sent to dust a guest-room and place some roses there. Throwing wide the windows, I proceeded to my task only as far as a table on which lay a little green-covered book I had never noticed before —"The Vision of Sir Launfal". I read it through three times, and then I walked straight out into that June day—dusting and flowers forgotten—down through the apple orchard and on across open fields to a sunny pasture, there to drop down on a great flat stone beside a brook with the poem in full possession of me. The printed book had been left far behind—it so often is—nor did I feel the desire to repeat any of the lines. The beauty of the poem had shot through my consciousness and stirred a new sense of wonder and delight in a perfect June day. I was twelve years old that summer and had such an anthology as "Golden Numbers"—with its "Chanted Calendar", "Green Things Growing", "On The Wing" and all its other invitations to read poetry for the pure joy of the experience—been in existence, I might now be looking back upon it as one of my vacation books. But Kate Douglas Wiggin and Nora Smith had not yet begun to make sum-

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mer and winter holiday with their "Posy Ring", their "Tales of Laughter", and "Tales of Wonder". Even "Timothy's Quest", so true to the spirit of childhood and to the life of a near-by township, was still to be written.

The visitors who came to stay in the guest-room brought with them copies of Sarah Orne Jewett's "Deephaven" and another book of her short stories. One of these stories—whose title I've forgotten—I still recall with a strong sense of its reality; and the impression it left with me that the lives of people who lived up and down the country roads over which I so often drove with my father, might have just such stories behind them.

That stories could be lived as well as dreamed I was now sure. Even as a child I felt this quality in Miss Jewett, the gift of giving back "the very life" as Kipling tells her in a letter about "The Country of the Pointed Firs". "So many people of lesser sympathy", he reminds her, "have missed the lovely New England landscape and the genuine New England nature. I don't believe even you know how good that work is."

The short story I remember so clearly is that of an elderly New England woman facing the necessity of giving up her old home. Surprised by the visit of a nephew and his family, she conceals her distress of mind by a camouflage of baking powder biscuits and hot gingerbread. As she puts the tins into the oven, she remembers that she has given the last drop of cream she had in the house as well as the last bit of pound cake to a little girl who had come early in the afternoon in the hope of finding some work to do in her summer vacation. Since she had to disappoint the child she must offer consolation of some kind—cream and pound cake vanished. Moreover she expressed no regret, but cheerfully rose to meet the present emergency by crossing the railway track to fetch a fresh pitcher of cream. On her return a train stood in her path. Hastily mounting the steps to the platform she was about to descend on the other side when the train began to move; and bareheaded, holding her pitcher of cream, the hospitable soul presently finds herself inside a Pullman car, speeding on to a distant station. Of course, she finds someone in need of cream. This time it is not a child but the invalid aunt of the young lady who lends her a "fascinator" and money for the return ticket. A few days later these travelers solve their problem as well as hers by coming to stay with her for the summer. The little girl is engaged to run errands and wash dishes, and the reader is left with an all-pervading sense of the kindliness of the world beyond New England, from which the travelers came, as well as with a delightful picture of that true hospitality which takes no account of age or station in life and is to be found alike in Old England and New England. Years later I was reminded of this story by certain chapters in "Cranford"—that "visionary country home" of Anne Thackeray Ritchie "which", she says, "I have visited all my life long (in spirit) for refreshment and change of scene."

"But will the girl of today read anything so slow as 'Cranford' or those charming stories of Miss Jewett—'The Queen's Twin', 'A White Heron', or 'The Country of the Pointed Firs'?" Not always, but I have so often shared my delight in these stories with groups of girls who have just begun to connect "Little Women" with the life of Louisa Alcott as they

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know it in a book, and "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm" with Kate Douglas Wiggin, as they have listened to her reading of her "Child's Journey With Dickens", that my faith is very strong in the natural appreciation of the girl of today provided she is not urged to read any given book. Put fine books in her way. Let her, in so far as may be, discover for herself those which seem to belong to her and in her own good time let her give testimony concerning them. There will be depths as well as heights in her reading as in her brother's. The perfect June day on which I discovered "The Vision of Sir Launfal" was succeeded by several rainy ones in which I discovered a barrelful of "The New York Ledger" and "Golden Days" stored away in an attic, and from the village library I read, surreptitiously, "St. Elmo", "Barriers Burned Away", and "Tempest and Sunshine". The latter was among the first of my "favorite novels of a brief period". I read most of the books written by Horatio Alger, Oliver Optic, Elijah Kellogg and other popular writers for boys. That the reading of all these books and many more "did me no harm", I can state with no such assurance as do the fathers of many boys I have known. Nor is such negative testimony of much value in the preparation of lists of vacation reading. We are slow to remember that with certain notable exceptions the children's books loved by one generation are rarely loved by the next. Poetry and fairy tales and some few stories live on with little change, but every generation claims its popular authors for both boys and girls.

It is a wise parent, scout leader, or camp counselor who reads books already in the hands of boys and girls before making a selection for his summer home or camp. Moreover, he must read with a forward as well as a backward look, if he would inspire continuous interest and respect for his judgment of books and his discernment of their appeal to the personalities of his prospective readers. No list, however carefully prepared, registers this last all-important element. Nothing short of give-and-take reading and discussion of books with children and young people will ever supply it; and no time is more favorable for such interchange than the rainy morning, the hot afternoon, or the cool night of a summer holiday.

Fortunate is the public library that stands at the meeting of vacation ways, and receives on return of its books lent for vacation reading first-hand evidence to show how these same books "got over" to boys and girls all the way from Maine to California—from Canada to Florida. Such evidence is invaluable in giving life and color to the selection of books at any season, and there has grown up in the summer city of New York as a result of it a kind of tradition that vacation reading is as much fun as anything else. That it has taken a natural place among summer sports and amusements there was convincing evidence in the summer of 1916, when children under sixteen years old were deprived of the privileges of the public library by the Health Department for a period of nearly three months. "First the movies closed, now the library. Gee! they'll be keeping us out of the river next!" exclaimed a boy on returning his books to one of the branch libraries near the Harlem river. The motion-picture houses reopened early in September for the admission of children of twelve years and older. No sooner did this become known than the boys and girls flocked

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to the libraries in all parts of the city. Great was their disappointment and surprise not to be admitted there. Although it was known that the public schools would not be open until the last week in September, it was popular rumored "If the movies, why not the libraries?" "I'm so *lonesome* for books," pleaded a little Russian girl, to be echoed by thousands of others from the Battery to the Bronx. Even the patrons of large and popular private collections of "Motor Boys", "Aviator Girls", "Elsie books", and "Alger books" had become bored. "The books we had were all alike," they said as they stretched out eager hands for the Lang Fairy Books, for Mark Twain, Howard Pyle and Stevenson, for Altsheler, Louisa Alcott, Kate Douglas Wiggin, Paul Du Chaillu and other authors not to be found in second-hand shops, on push-carts, or in the possession of their friends. The owner of one of these private libraries, who had been lending from it generously, appeared at his branch library on the opening day to ask for "Men of Iron" and for certain other books which he said "cost too much" to buy for his own library. A boy who was looking for "Hugh Wynne" remarked, with a twinkle in his eye, that he had had nothing to read all summer except "The Ladies' Home Journal". Many and intimate were the revelations concerning the reading of boys and girls during that long, oppressive summer vacation, for although denied admission to the libraries, the children were not prevented from talking with the children's librarians as they met them in the streets. No one who spent any part of that summer in New York will ever forget it or fail to give books a different place in the vacation days of those who stay at home as well as of those who "ride away" to the country, the mountains, or the seashore. The element of companionship in books selected for vacation reading was brought home more vividly than ever before. Rows of perennial favorites stood unopened on library shelves —the very books we had so often recognized in the hands of children who, like "David Copperfield", might be seen "reading for dear life" on the doorsteps of crowded streets, on the roofs of tenement houses, on the fire escapes, in shady corners of parks and playgrounds, on the recreation piers, on ferryboats, under the bridges:— wherever it is humanly possible for children to read library books, there they are read in vacation time.

"Don't you think John ought to follow some special line in his reading this summer?", asked an anxious mother. By all means, if he has a special interest and a craving to satisfy it with books, provide him with a liberal supply of histories, books of exploration, Greek myths, Arthurian legends, Norse stories, natural histories, stories of animals, Indians— whatever may be drawing him most strongly; but don't lay out a special course of reading for John or Mary if you want them to love books and form natural associations with them. Let them choose for themselves from a large and varied collection the books they would like to take away with them, or would like to read to forget that they cannot go away. You would have liked to do that at their age wouldn't you? In the presence of books and children the anxious mother succumbed to the reminder of her own youth, and next day came accompanied not only by John and Mary but by Barbara and Michael, to each of whom is accorded the vacation privilege of taking eight books on a card. The anxious mother is no longer apprehen-

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sive concerning John's future career, but lends yeoman's service in testing books from the children's standpoint, and is rewarded by being told she may choose two of each eight "to please yourself".

JOHN'S LIST

(John is just a nice all-round boy about thirteen years old.)

The Boys' Book of Model Aeroplanes.
The American Boys' Book of Signs, Signals, and Symbols.
The Book of a Naturalist.
The Cruise of the Cachalot.
Captains Courageous.
The Three Musketeers.
The Mysterious Island.
Kidnapped.

BARBARA'S LIST

(Barbara is rather dreamy—wants to be beautiful and popular, about twelve years old.)

Golden Numbers.
How to Swim.
Andersen's Fairy Tales. (For The Snow Queen, The Wild Swans and The Little Mermaid.)
Stories from Old French Romance.
Kenilworth.
Cheney's Life of Louisa Alcott.
Little Women (to reread).
Master Simon's Garden
or
Mary's Meadow.

MARY'S LIST

(Mary is ten years old and very practical—climbs trees.)

When Mother Lets Us Make Candy.
The Swiss Family Robinson (for rereading).
What Happened to Inger Johanne. (Delightful stories from the Norwegian.)
The Slowcoach.
Conundrums, Riddles, Puzzles and Games.
Jack and Jill.
The Peterkin Papers.
The Princess and the Goblin.
The Adventures of Buffalo Bill.

MICHAEL'S LIST

(Michael is nine years old, with a strong interest in natural history and fairy tales.)

Grimm's Fairy Tales.
The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood.
The Children's Book.
The Jungle Book.
Alice in Wonderland.
The Pied Piper.
The Burgess Bird Book.
Pinocchio, the Adventures of an Italian Marionette.

Michael will welcome "The Burgess Animal Book" when it is published. He pores over Hornaday's "American Natural History" and every illustrated natural history he can find.

"I've a shrewd suspicion", says the children's librarian, who contributed this selection of books made by one family, "that each child will read the other's books. In that way the impractical ones often get the benefit of the selection of the practical minded, and vice versa. It will be good for Barbara to read "The Peterkin Papers", and it won't hurt Mary to read "Golden Numbers" on the sly—up in her tree."

There is always much rereading of old favorites in the summer vacation: "Mother Goose", "The Nonsense Book", "The Child's Garden of Verses", "Just So Stories", the "Arabian Nights", the "Fairy Tales" of the Grimms and Hans Andersen, "The Home Book of Verse for Young Folks", "Little Women", "The Last of the Mohicans", "Treasure Island", "Alice in Wonderland", "Through the Looking Glass", "The Princess and Curdie", "The Jungle Books". And from this rereading there comes an invigoration of mind and spirit which is often reflected in the speech of the returned vacation reader.

"How do you do, Miss Elegant Fowl", was the gay salute of one small boy to the librarian who received his vacation books, and well it is for her prestige that she is able to respond in the same vein. She must not become stodged with books or with theories of children's reading if she would take a natural place in vacation days as "the lady who knows all the books by heart—knows how to skip the dull parts and how to substitute one book for another when the one you really want is being read by somebody else."

"I've finished 'The Wonderful Adventures of Nils' and I want you to

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send me the second volume right away," wrote Edouard from the country last summer; "I'm half way through 'Little Smoke' but I like 'Nils' the best." Edouard, whose devotion to Thornton Burgess has been chronicled in THE BOOKMAN, was ten years old when he discovered the Swedish classic in a selection of eight books chosen with a view to relieving the boredom of a summer vacation in a country boarding house where he was stranded with his mother and baby sister. The selection included stories of Indians, pirates, South Sea Islanders, the "Just So Stories", and Thornton Burgess's "Danny Meadow Mouse". The second volume of "Nils" was promptly dispatched by post. On Edouard's return "David Blaize and the Blue Door" lay upon my desk to be greeted with: "Here's another of those books I know aren't true but I wish might be. May I take it?" He vanished, to return next day with eyes shining over the chapter on flying. "Something like 'Nils' only a different country and a younger boy," he said, as he picked up a copy of "Lilliput Levee" which he read on the spot, chuckling delightedly. "May I take this to learn to speak in school? It would make everybody laugh except our teacher." He decided that the risk might be too great for an ordinary school day. "Lilliput Levee" must be read in holiday mood. This summer Edouard, at eleven, is still reading Thornton Burgess but is discovering Seton's "Biography of a Grizzly", "Wild Animals I Have Known", and "Two Little Savages". "The Red Fox" of G. C. D. Roberts has given him great delight. I know that he will listen fascinated to such chapters as "Bats", "The Toad as Traveler", and "A Sentimentalist on Foxes" from Hudson's "Book of a Naturalist"; and will read for himself "The Discontented Squirrel", which is in reality a very charming story for still younger children with its vivid picture of the migration of squirrels.

Edouard goes to a boys' camp this summer, and it is easy to picture him vibrating between the groups of older and younger boys at story-hour time. If the opening chapters of John Muir's "Story of My Boyhood and Youth" are read aloud he will be held with the same interest he has manifested in the lives of Joan of Arc, Mark Twain, and Cardinal Mercier. "I can tell a great man when I see him—nobody needs to point him out to me," Edouard said of Cardinal Mercier as that great figure passed down the stairway of the Library and stopped at the entrance to speak to a little girl who stood outside.

This quick sensibility of childhood to great things in life or in literature is too often forgotten by those who would bring them together by a preconceived plan. Opal Whiteley's "Journal of an Understanding Heart" in "The Atlantic Monthly", and Hilda Conkling's "Poems by a Little Girl" are stirring something deeper than surface criticism in the minds of those who have not lost their sense of wonder in the presence of childhood. I look upon their publication not alone with the joy of an exploring reader, but as most significant signs that we are moving toward a larger and freer development of writing and publishing books for children in the twentieth century.

" 'The Call of the Wild' is the best book I ever read", said one of a group of boys, two or three years older than Edouard, who were discussing dog stories in a branch library recently. "I read it for the first time in Alaska", he continued, "and I know it is true to

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life there. When I came home I read it again and I liked it even better here in New York than in Alaska—I could imagine myself back there."

This boy, who has traveled extensively in South America and Europe as well as in the United States, brings to his reading at the age of twelve a background of great interest to other boys. Nearly all of the group had read "Lad" and liked it very much. One boy had read John Muir's "Stickeen", a wonderful story to read aloud. "Pierrot, Dog of Belgium" was recommended by another. "The Dogs of Boytown" was characterized as a book they would have liked better had the boys and the town been left out. The interest of this book is in its information concerning different breeds of dogs from the standpoint of a well-known writer on the subject.

"Bob, Son of Battle" and "Greyfriars Bobby" would appeal to such a group of boys more strongly two or three years later.

There is a librarian whose love of dogs and keen interest in vacation reading come strongly to mind as this article reaches, not its end, but its space limits—Caroline M. Hewins of the Hartford Public Library. Long before children's rooms were opened in our public libraries or nature study had been undertaken by the schools and museums, Miss Hewins's Agassiz Club and Vacation Reading Hours were established features in the summer life of the City of Hartford, radiating to other cities and country places through book-lists and articles on children's reading of equal value to parents, teachers, and librarians. Miss Hewins's "Books for Boys and Girls. A Selected List" is the best list I know of. The latest edition, printed in 1915, the lineal descendant of a list selected by her in 1882 in which Tom Sawyer is given his true place among children's books, is characterized by the same wide knowledge of books and rich experience of life. This list may well be supplemented by lists including more recent publications selected by The Bookshop for Boys and Girls of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union of Boston, and by the new Handbook for Scout Masters, and the lists of books for Boy Scouts selected by Franklin K. Mathiews of the Boy Scouts of America. "Scouting for Girls", the new official Handbook of Girl Scouts, contains a reading-list selected by its editor, Josephine Daskam Bacon, in conference with scout leaders and librarians.

Ivanhoe. By Sir Walter Scott. J. B. Lippincott Co.

The Vision of Sir Launfal. By James Russell Lowell. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Golden Numbers. Selected by Kate Douglas Wiggin and Nora Archibald Smith. Doubleday, Page and Co.

Posy Ring. Selected by Kate Douglas Wiggin and Nora Archibald Smith. Doubleday, Page and Co.

Tales of Laughter. Edited by Kate Douglas Wiggin and Nora Archibald Smith. Doubleday, Page and Co.

Tales of Wonder. Edited by Kate Douglas Wiggin and Nora Archibald Smith. Doubleday, Page and Co.

Timothy's Quest. By Kate Douglas Wiggin. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Deephaven. By Sarah Orne Jewett. Houghton Mifflin Co.

The Country of the Pointed Firs. By Sarah Orne Jewett. Houghton Mifflin Co.

*Letters of Sarah Orne Jewett. Edited by Mrs. Annie Fields. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Cranford. By Mrs. E. C. Gaskell. The Macmillan Co.

The Queen's Twin and Other Stories. By Sarah Orne Jewett. Houghton Mifflin Co.

A White Heron and Other Stories. By Sarah Orne Jewett. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Men of Iron. By Howard Pyle. Harper and Bros.

Hugh Wynne. By S. Weir Mitchell. The Century Co.

The Boys' Book of Model Aeroplanes. By F. A. Collins. The Century Co.

The American Boys' Book of Signs, Signals and Symbols. By D. C. Beard. J. B. Lippincott Co.

The Book of a Naturalist. By. W. H. Hudson. George H. Doran Company.

The Cruise of the Cachalot. By Frank Bullen. D. Appleton and Co.

Captains Courageous. By Rudyard Kipling. The Century Co.

The Three Musketeers. By Alexandre Dumas. Thomas Y. Crowell Co.

The Mysterious Island. By Jules Verne. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Kidnapped. By Robert Louis Stevenson. Illustrated by N. C. Wyeth. Charles Scribner's Sons.

*For the adult reader.

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How to Swim. By Davis Dalton. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Fairy Tales. By Hans Christian Andersen. E. P. Dutton and Co.

Stories from Old French Romance. By E. M. Wilmot-Buxton. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

Kenilworth. By Sir Walter Scott. J. B. Lippincott Co.

Louisa May Alcott. By Mrs. E. D. L. Cheney. Little, Brown and Co.

Little Women. By Louisa M. Alcott. Little, Brown and Co.

Master Simon's Garden. By Cornelia Meigs. The Macmillan Co.

Mary's Meadow. By Mrs. Ewing. The Macmillan Co.

When Mother Lets Us Make Candy. By E. D. and L. F. Bache. Moffat, Yard and Co.

The Swiss Family Robinson. By J. R. Wyss. Harper and Bros.

What Happened to Inger Johanne. By Dikken Zwilgmeyer. Trans. by Emilie Poulsson. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard.

The Slowcoach. By E. V. Lucas. The Macmillan Co.

Conundrums, Riddles, Puzzles and Games. By S. J. Cutter. Kegan, Paul Trench, Trubner and Co.

Jack and Jill. By Louisa Alcott. Little, Brown and Co.

The Peterkin Papers. By Lucretia P. Hale. Houghton Mifflin Co.

The Princess and the Goblin. By George Macdonald. Blackie.

The Adventures of Buffalo Bill. By W. F. Cody. Harper and Bros.

Fairy Tales. By Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. J. B. Lippincott Co.

The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood. By Howard Pyle. Harper and Bros.

The Children's Book. Edited by Horace E. Scudder. Houghton Mifflin Co.

The Jungle Book. By Rudyard Kipling. The Century Co.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. By Lewis Carroll. The Macmillan Co.

The Pied Piper. By Robert Browning. Illustrated by Kate Greenaway. Frederick Warne and Co.

The Burgess Bird Book. By Thornton Burgess. Little, Brown and Co.

Pinocchio. By Carlo Lorenzini. Ginn and Co.

The Old Nursery Rhymes. Illustrated by Arthur Rackham. The Century Co.

The Complete Nonsense Book. By Edward Lear. Duffield and Co.

The Child's Garden of Verses. By Robert Louis Stevenson. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Just So Stories. By Rudyard Kipling. Doubleday, Page and Co.

The Arabian Nights Entertainments. Illustrated by Maxfield Parrish. Charles Scribner's Sons.

The Home Book of Verse for Young Folks. Edited by Burton E. Stevenson. Henry Holt and Co.

The Last of the Mohicans. By J. Fenimore Cooper. Illustrated by N. C. Wyeth. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Treasure Island. By Robert Louis Stevenson. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Through the Looking Glass. By Lewis Carroll. The Macmillan Co.

The Princess and Curdie. By George Macdonald. Blackie.

The Wonderful Adventures of Nils. By Selma Lagerlöf. Doubleday, Page and Co.

Little Smoke. By W. O. Stoddard. D. Appleton and Co.

Danny Meadow Mouse. By Thornton Burgess. Little, Brown and Co.

David Blaize and the Blue Door. By E. F. Benson. George H. Doran Company.

Lilliput Lyrics. By William Brighty Rand. John Lane Co.

The Biography of a Grizzly. By Ernest Thompson Seton. The Century Co.

Wild Animals I Have Known. By Ernest Thompson Seton. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Two Little Savages. By Ernest Thompson Seton. Doubleday, Page and Co.

The Red Fox. By C. G. D. Roberts. Doubleday, Page and Co.

The Story of My Boyhood and Youth. By John Muir. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Joan of Arc. By Boutet de Monvel. The Century Co.

Poems by a Little Girl. By Hilda Conkling. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

The Call of the Wild. By Jack London. The Macmillan Co.

Lad: The Story of a Dog. By Albert Payson Terhune. E. P. Dutton and Co.

Stickeen. By John Muir. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Pierrot, Dog of Belgium. By Walter Dyer. Doubleday, Page and Co.

The Dogs of Boytown. By Walter Dyer. Henry Holt and Co.

Bob, Son of Battle. By Alfred Ollivant. Doubleday, Page and Co.

Greyfriars Bobby. By Elinor Atkinson. Harper and Bros.

Books for Boys and Girls. A selected list. By Caroline M. Hewins. The American Library Association.

Handbook for Scout Masters. Boy Scouts of America.

Scouting for Girls. Edited by Josephine Daskam Bacon. Girl Scouts of America.

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THE MOTHER OF ART AND REVOLUTION

BY THOMAS H. DICKINSON

WE have had many books about the Russian Revolution, a few of which have been good. Fortunately for the reviewer, Oliver Sayler's two books, "The Russian Theatre Under the Revolution" and "Russia White or Red", belong to the good class. Indispensable requirements in the treatment of an epoch-making event like the Russian Revolution are that it shall not be handled with "authority", that the writer shall not attempt to say the "final" word, and that if he wishes to "seek out the heart of its mystery" he shall handle his scalpel modestly and with no flourishes. "We reach for the universe and get—bathos", writes H. G. Wells in one of his rare moments of self-criticism. In all respects of the discretion that an author owes to a great theme, Mr. Sayler's two books are models of appropriateness.

Of these two book I imagine that the first, "The Russian Theatre Under the Revolution", is the one that most lured the author on in his adventure. And in spite of his ancient predilection for the theatre and the joy that he had in paying tribute to the mother of modern theatrical art, I imagine it is the second book which gives him his greatest satisfaction as he looks back on it. Certainly, in the writing of this, he discovered new powers in his already generous equipment as critic and student of social events.

It subtracts nothing from the dignity of the modern theatre, which itself has its disciples, its devotees, and even its martyrs, that a cause has arisen which dwarfs the achievements and passions of that theatre. Whatever may have been the author's first intention, whatever it was that drove him forth in the summer of 1917 to wander counter-clockwise around the world, it was the Russian Revolution that in the end justified his journey. He would study at its fountainhead the inspiration of modern theatrical art, its spiritualized realism, its fanciful futurism, its music and dance and color. He started on a quest of art and found himself at the heart of intense reality.

I would not have it thought that there is anything pale in the Russian theatre as Sayler saw it. Its persistence under the abnormal conditions of the Soviet Revolution bears witness to the extraordinary vitality of the theatre itself and to the spiritual quality of the Russian social genius. Within a few days after the author reached Moscow, the Art Theatre opened again after its temporary eclipse. Thereafter, it and the other theatres of Moscow were open regularly. The author was fortunate in making his connections. He was taken into the charmed circle wherever he went. Apparently, nothing discouraged him—no impediments of language, pressure

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of time, or random bursts of musketry, hindered him from his thoughtful foregathering with the men who had made the Russian theatre and quickened the theatre of the western world. He took with him his best gifts as critic—a quick eye, ready critical discernment, and an easy pen. He added to these gifts something of the historian's grasp of the unity of events.

The result is a quite unusual freshness and lucidity in the view we get of the Russian theatre. It is as if the study of the theatre itself were lighted by the fires of the Revolution. We find the great men of the Russian theatre — Stanislavsky, Dantchenko, Tairoff, Kommissarzhevsky, Meyerhold—still at work and faithful to the vision in the midst of a world on fire. The Moscow Art Theatre is the mother art theatre of the world, the one theatre which under a democratic system has done what state theatres are supposed to be able to do and so often have failed in doing. Its method, Sayler well calls the "method of spiritualized realism". Next to it is the Kamerny Theatre, the headquarters of futuristic art. And then in highways and byways there are the theatres of newer growth, of more anarchistic trend in art, if not in politics. And after Moscow there is Petrograd.

"The Russian Theatre Under the Revolution" is written by a man trained by years to the task of dramatic criticism. "Russia White or Red" is the work of the same man, who turns his pen to larger issues than those with which it is wont to deal. How is it then that quite aside from subject-matter, one prefers the latter book, considers it to be better done, and even to rise here and there to a tragic dignity? I confess that I came to this judgment in spite of myself, for (I humbly apologize to the author, whose friendship I value) I had expected simply another work by an ill-informed excursionist. This book is a better book than the other because, granted a tutored mind, a writer will always tend to rise to his theme. To practise dramatic criticism, which seems to be the one art in which men are permitted to express judgments on things in general, there is needed clear sight, mental honesty, respect for humanity, hatred of cant and stereotyped thinking, and a ready pen not too weighted with subtleties and high meanings. Put these qualities to work on a play and they make an engaging dramatic criticism. Put them to work on a world upheaval, and they are likely to avoid many of the faults of authoritarianism, bumptiousness, and special pleading that have disfigured much writing on the Russian Revolution.

There are many reasons why I am enthusiastic for "Russia White or Red", but I can refer to only two or three of them. In the first place, since I cannot be in Russia myself, the book helps me to see what I should want to see if I were there. I see the crowded railway stations, the disordered mansions, the long queues, the home life disordered by anxiety and a new poverty. I see the hardships of the food supply and the petty inconveniences which go with the changing of order and the law. I do not see much fighting, nor are the chief actors drawn frequently onto the scene. I should not see these if I were a citizen of Russia or a random participant.

And then, this book helps me to think, and provides a canon of honesty in thinking. That is an entirely different thing from thinking for me, or showing me what to think. The Rus-

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sian Revolution is so confused in a multitude of issues that it is difficult to maintain an even keel. He who shows me how to bring candor and open-mindedness to bear on this great problem has rendered no slight service. Candor and open-mindedness are the distinguishing features of Mr. Sayler's work. This is shown even in such a minor matter as the title of his book. I confess that the alternative form, "Russia White or Red", troubled me until I had read the book. But the book gives the answer. There are not two Russias today. There is only one Russia. She is confused, distracted, her transportation is broken down, her money is valueless, her people are starving. At her borders, the Allied policy—enlightened or selfish—has thrown a fringe of little states to keep her from the outside world. But Russia is a unit. Russia is not indulging in a debate in which sooner or later she will take sides. She is blundering into new paths with nothing to guide her but her own genius.

Another thing is clear. Except for the economic features, which we are tending to overdo in these days, Russia is sufficient to herself. No nation of the western world is so well equipped to live spiritually upon her own forces. This is shown in the theatre as well as in the Revolution. The Russian theatre has been source, model, and inspiration to the rest of the world. It has not received a corresponding influence from without. In the repertories of the Russian theatre one finds a little of Ibsen, a little of Hauptmann; a favorite is the "Salome" of Wilde. But there is no artistic *drang nach osten* from the western world into Russia. The tendency is all the other way. Even Japan has shown more of the effects of the philosophy of the western world than has Russia.

Two further points demand a word of mention. The author's statement of the position of the Czech regiments in Russia, throwing, as it does, an elucidating light on the loss of Admiral Koltchak, should be read by everyone interested in Allied policy in Russia. And no less salutary would it be for many Americans to taste the author's censure of America's pretensions in Russia, our easy disposition to take an attitude of authority on matters of which we hardy know the alphabet, "our tendency to let benevolence take the place of understanding".

The writer of these words did not get into Russia. But he did stand in her Baltic front-yard, now broken into kitchen middens, and wait for Petrograd to fall. Now and then there came word from without that Petrograd was soon to come into the hands of the opponents of Bolshevism. While we were waiting we heard a crash, and learned that Odessa had fallen. But she fell inward. Denikin advanced from the south and retreated again. Koltchak established a White capital at Omsk, and was dispossessed and led to his doom. There have been many crises, but Petrograd has not fallen. If you want to know why Petrograd has not fallen, it may be well to read these two books.

The Russian Theatre Under the Revolution. By Oliver M. Sayler. Little, Brown and Co.

Russia White or Red. By Oliver M. Sayler. Little, Brown and Co.

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CERTAIN DRAMAS OF DAILY LIFE

BY MONTROSE J. MOSES

THE drama abhors a closed door. There is no form of literature that can penetrate so deeply, so swiftly to the very heart of life lived by actual people; no form that shows more accurately the interplay of characters. You cannot fill up the interstices with description; you cannot pause over personal emotion; you cannot halt your plot by side issues, however interesting. All these are given to the novelist; to the dramatist they are denied. But he has his compensations; he omits circumlocutions. In fact, he does not have to knock on the door for entrance; he just goes in, unexpectedly and unawares; he senses a social problem at its imminent height; he stands unseen, as referee between the younger generation and the older. There are some writers solely concerned with the social or moral issues; to them the thesis is paramount. But there is another type of realistic drama much more potent—the one where character is more interesting than statement; where judicial poise is subservient to faithfulness of human reaction; where sense is not allowed to outweigh common sense.

The tragical in daily life—which is neither the old tragedy nor the thesis plea—has almost created a type of play peculiarly its own. There were intimations of it long ago in Henry Arthur Jones and Pinero; but it soon became conventionalized in society drama—where the only doors to open were those of the drawing-room or the bedroom; and where there was no wallpaper design of varied color, but the same old primrose path of dalliance with whitewashed heroines to greet the eye. St. John Ervine is among those who have lately, through dexterous faithfulness, reached the limit of realistic portrayal in the new type of play. It is well to consider him because of the unusual performance of his "John Ferguson" by the Theatre Guild in New York last season, and because of the recent production by the same organization of his "Jane Clegg", while Mr. Ervine was visiting this country. No matter whether you read or see the former play, you instinctively turn to the repertory of the Abbey Theatre Players for comparison. An Irish drama, no matter what its political differences, its religious problems, its social portraiture, is always of the same rhythm, has always the same color for a background, and has always, criss-crossed in it like the fine veining of marble, a native humor of character,—the special genius of the present generation of Irish writers. Witness Padraic Colum and Lennox Robinson. In so far may Ervine lay kinship to local influence.

Nevertheless, after reading his plays and novels, one places him outside that literary renaissance so soulfully cham-

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pioned by Yeats, so successfully mothered by Lady Gregory. This may be because his traditions are of Ulster, not of the South. It may be because of his Protestantism, his unprovincialism as a London journalist, his repertorial observation rather than poetic creativeness. "The Magnanimous Lover" and "Mixed Marriage" were produced during the Yeats-Gregory régime at the Abbey; their acceptance was an indication that the Irish theatre could not live by dreams alone. "John Ferguson" was seen at the Abbey while Ervine was the manager, and this was, as Ernest Boyd has so discriminatingly stated, when the Irish Repertory Theatre was on a new road—the road of Irish realism, corresponding somewhat to the English realism.

So, we must not regard Ervine as of the school of Yeats, nor of the tradition of Synge, nor of the Gaelic propagandism of Douglas Hyde. He is a journalist, with no idea of "reviving" anything; merely an excellent writer, viewing his country as rich in character,—which is more interesting by far to him than the fabric of legend upon which Yeats embroiders his poetic designs. You cannot compare Ervine with Synge, whose pen was moved by his spiritual nature, whose people were shaped by the hidden force of their emotions. Ervine obtains movement in his dramas through the skill and dexterity with which they are constructed. Their action is consciously external, not internal. Yet, in none of his plays can one criticize St. John Ervine for his lack of rich comprehension of the strength and weakness of Irish nature. He is merely showing the manner of his type—the manner of realistic treatment of the tragical in daily life.

Recall the Irish plays you have read or seen since the visit of the Irish players to America. Their genius is of the same stuff; poetry is bred in their bone as music is part of their speech. Superstition and the mystic and a certain quality of humor are of them, as the color of their hair, the beauty of their skin, the flash of their eye are part of their distinctive beauty. It is not the poet who made the almond eye and the cherry-blossoms of Japan. But the poet can make the most of them in art. That is the local influence.

All of Ervine's important plays have been seen in America: "The Magnanimous Lover", "Mixed Marriage", "John Ferguson", and "Jane Clegg". They show him interested in unyielding religious training, in conflict of religious differences, in the younger generation breaking through tradition and the God-fearing dictates of parents. Both "John Ferguson" and "Jane Clegg" are apparent pieces of work, in the theatre and in the book. The whole vitality of the former play is dependent not on plot, but on the way John Ferguson's character acts as the ebb-tide against which the young folk beat in their efforts to reach the stream of a larger life. We know everything that is going to happen, yet there is cumulative suspense notwithstanding. The piece is excellently dramatic, despite certain prolixity of dialogue. I can think of no recent play where the dramatist more completely shows every card in his hand. Yet Ferguson's severe biblical piety, the son's young conscience torn by law, and the final crumbling of Protestant rectitude—all these are absorbing in the acted play.

Where one feels Ervine failing is in the conclusion of his story, which indicates his limitations as an artist. It may be true to life for men like Fer-

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guson, no matter what bitterness overtakes them, to fall back on religious smugness; it may be true for mothers of a certain type to be calculating with the souls of their children. But we expect some spiritual reactions from a girl who has gone through dire experiences for which her brother sacrifices himself. Sympathy dwindles in "John Ferguson", and there remain the bare husks of a Puritan philosophy, neither refreshing to contemplate nor comforting to remember. We do not care for the future of any of these characters: the truism that life often hangs by the bare thread of accident strikes us with no poignancy; for it does not touch the profundities. Blame this on certain limitations of the realistic play, yet Ervine must himself be judged for his lack of interest in the spiritual outcome.

"Jane Clegg" exhibits the same mathematical precision of plot structure as "John Ferguson"; it is even more of an external piece. It is less native and racy, because it is more English. If there is a thesis to the play, it is to show the falsity of the marriage oath that a woman must take a man for worse. But there is an accumulation of circumstances shaping the hardness of Jane Clegg, the worst of all being old mother Clegg, who is forever spoiling her grandchildren, and condoning the sins of her son by copybook morality. Here the tragical in daily life is unillumined, despite the action which drives Henry Clegg from his home. It's a clever picture, but, as in Barker's "The Madras House", there is no soft tone to the print. Jane is positive and correct in what she does, but her revolt leaves her unresponsive spiritually. Contrast her with Nora, in "A Doll's House", after the great scene with Thorvald.

I cannot rate Ervine's dramatic workmanship above his ability as a novelist, revealed, for instance, in his novel "Changing Winds"—one of the best of war stories and studies. But his plays are in many ways an indication of his journalistic development. As a boy, we are told, he feasted on the Bible, Fox's "Book of Martyrs", and "Paradise Lost"—a strong literary diet for a youth! The Bible and Fox crept into the make-up of Ferguson, but no nationalism has crept into his work, despite his coming from Belfast. It is not as an Irishman that he writes in "Mixed Marriage": "Ye cudden tell the differs atween a Cathlik an' a Prodesan if ye met them in the street an' didden know what their religion wus." Born in Ireland thirty-six years ago, there is the London cut to his mind. The interest in his dramas when projected on the stage is dependent on the way the characters are played. Fortunately, in the main, they have been well presented. But, as literature, their literary flavor is journalistic—not a bad attribute, but bad in comparison with the Irish and English writing of the recent Renaissance.

And just here is the superiority of John Masefield's "The Tragedy of Nan"—that its flavor is the richness of the soil from which it seems to spring—the elemental strain which deepens situation and struggle. The moral agony of Nan—the agony of joy in love, of pain in daily living, her bitterness out of love—all constitute a tragedy of soul rather than a shaping of plot. The style is heightened prose, like Synge's—and the poetic interplay of suggestion and response between Gaffer and Nan before she finally kills herself—so different from the scene between Clutie and Andrew in "John Ferguson"—yet both the better for pruning in the stage version—is writ-

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ten with the feeling of the poet rather than with the eye of the reporter. There are two things said by Masefield in the foreword to the printed play which show the web and woof of "Nan". "Tragedy at its best", he writes, "is a vision of the heart of life." It, therefore, goes further than the realistic tragedy. Again, "Our playwrights have all the powers except that power of exultation which comes from a delightful brooding on excessive, terrible things." Andrew, in "John Ferguson", might have been the vivid picture that Nan will always remain, had Ervine what Masefield has to a wonderful degree—a "delightful brooding on excessive, terrible things".

"The Tragedy of Nan" is actable, but it is not the theatrically effective piece that either "John Ferguson" or "Jane Clegg" is. Yet its situations are almost melodramatic in their suspense. Its slowness may be because there is noble writing in the dialogue, and noble writing is not always moving in the theatrical, structural sense. Nan's brooding is a spiritual surging of youth—all warm and live and passionate. Here is no photograph, but a canvas rich in color. One sometimes, while witnessing the play, almost wishes that Masefield had an eye to those externals which Ervine watches so closely. It would make him swifter on the stage whenever his fine literary sense lingers. As sheer actable writing goes, Ervine is better in both "Ferguson" and "Clegg" than Masefield in "Nan". But vision brought to reality makes of "Nan" the superior play.

These three plays mentioned show to me clearly the limitations of a too real reality in drama, and the significant beauty of exultation in character portrayal. We have our choice, and I believe we have passed the point of painting the things as they are: we've gone beyond Shaw and Brieux in content if not in dexterity. The eye has too long been pampered in drama while the spirit thirsted. The era of doors that lead to conditions of time and place seems to be at an end: doors that open on drawing-rooms and bedrooms are giving place to doors that open on to human souls.

John Ferguson. By St. John Ervine. The Macmillan Co.
Jane Clegg. By St. John Ervine. Henry Holt and Co.
The Tragedy of Nan. By John Masefield. The Macmillan Co.

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LOOKING AHEAD WITH THE PUBLISHERS

THE great majority of mortals—I include myself—have been content merely to think of "Shakespeare" as the greatest of English dramatists, and to feel that the actual identity of the author was of little consequence when taken into consideration with the importance of his work. "Shakespeare", be he William Shakspere, Bacon, or another, having accomplished the greatest achievement in the history of literature, will always be secondary to that achievement. Yet there have always been enough inquiring spirits to keep alive the question of the actual identity of "Shakespeare". The weakness of the Stratfordian — or William Shakspere — theory has long been acknowledged. Among those who feel that tardy justice should be done to some person unknown for the quite evidently misplaced credit of the authorship is J. Thomas Looney, whose "Shakespeare Identified" will soon be published by Stokes. His conclusions are as unusual and startling as his investigations have been complete. "At the beginning", the author states in his introduction, "it was mainly the fascination of an interesting enquiry that held me, and the matter was pursued in the spirit of simple research. As the case developed, however, it has tended increasingly to assume the form of a serious purpose, aiming at a long overdue act of justice and reparation to an unappreciated genius who, we believe, ought now to be put in possession of his rightful honours; and to whose memory should be accorded a gratitude proportionate to the benefits he has conferred upon mankind in general, and the lustre he has shed upon England in particular." This "unappreciated genius" is Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, who apparently fits the "Shakespeare" mold without a flaw. Mr. Looney has carried his investigations to the point where they deserve the serious consideration of experts. How many of the premises stated in "Shakespeare Identified" will be admitted by those who hold the Stratfordian view, is a matter for speculation.

* * * *

The author of "Uncensored Celebrities", E. T. Raymond, will publish through Henry Holt and Company a new volume of sketches under the title of "All and Sundry". From the American point of view the accent should be placed rather strongly on the "Sundry", as the subjects of the sketches—with a few exceptions—are Englishmen but slightly known to our reading public. Undoubtedly the most interesting of the exceptions is the characterization — flattering or uncomplimentary, as you will—of President Wilson. Of the change in Europe's attitude toward Woodrow Wilson Mr. Raymond very honestly says: "One feels just a little as one does on taking tea with a Bishop after he has deliv-

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ered his charge. The lawn sleeves are no longer there, and the gaiters are very visible; one is conscious of the fallible human being, the more conscious because of the veneration lately felt for him in his pontifical character. Bishops ought never to take tea, or to forsake splendid generalities."

* * * *

Proceeding on the Darwinian theory that man has descended, or ascended, from the ape, it is easy to imagine that the civilization of man might easily have been instead, by a different development, the civilization of the lion or any other animal. We might have had, for instance, a world ruled by lions, by goats, or guinea pigs. Clarence Day has compared the world-as-it-is with the world-as-it-might-have-been in a rather amusing and clever fashion. "This Simian World" will soon be published by Knopf. It is one of the few books concerning this much-harassed globe, which makes me feel that things, bad as they may be at present, might have been worse. Oliver Herford set an admirable example in guying this too bothersome universe in his "Giddy Globe". When he completed his book he said: "This globe, you know, is not all it's cracked up to be. It ought to be abolished."

* * * *

Virginia Woolf, latest addition to that brightly-shining constellation of English realists which includes Walpole, Bennett, Wells, Beresford, and Swinnerton, will soon publish her first novel through George H. Doran Company. "The Voyage Out" is fearless, almost disconcertingly so. Leaning somewhat toward the introspection of Swinnerton's "September", it leaves the sense of being more vital, more powerful, equally engrossing. There is something greater than talent that marks this book. Cleverness it undoubtedly has. But it has a further poignancy of emotion and an extent of originality which bring the conviction of genius. And her humor is based on the fundamental absurdities of ordinary people brought together under the most commonplace of circumstances. It is more than possible that those unfortunate readers who prefer their literature put up, like their medicine, in candy form, will leave "The Voyage Out" at the first port of call, if they do not indeed abandon it in mid-ocean.

* * * *

Houghton Mifflin announce as an important May publication, "The New Bee", by Vernon Kellogg of Hoover's Belgian staff. Turning to the realm of natural history, like Mr. Day in "This Simian World", Mr. Kellogg takes for his heroine a lady of the race of bees—one Nuova by name. Nuova, though a worker, finds time between seasons to fall in love (this I have always been led to believe was the prerogative of the Queen) and goes through adventures allegorical and satirical. The story as a whole is a rather clever caricature of certain types of modern women.

* * * *

Herman Klein some years ago began with Adelina Patti a record of the latter's extraordinary career. Other important matters prevented Mme. Patti from carrying out the original plan, but Mr. Klein, a musical critic and scholar of eminent ability, completed the biography, writing in full the story of her life. A generation was born, grew to maturity, and passed on to the haven of "The Lost Chord", while Mme. Patti sang her glorious way around the world. Beginning at the age of seven, for nearly sixty years her flaming genius held

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undoubted supremacy in the world of music. "The Reign of Patti", soon to be published by the Century Company, shows in its meticulous characterization of Adelina Patti and in its insight into the life of so splendid a genius, the worthwhile results of years of labor.

* * * *

Those whose interest has been aroused by the rather unusual work of the Provincetown Players will I am sure be interested in the publication of eight one-act plays, by Susan Glaspell, which brought so much fame to the Little Theatre movement. Susan Glaspell (Mrs. George Cram Cook) has been one of the mainstays of the Provincetown Players. Her "Plays" are to be published by Small, Maynard and Company.

* * * *

Catherine Carswell's "Open the Door", which has just won the Melrose £250 first-novel prize in London, is announced for June publication by Harcourt, Brace and Howe. As a story of a girl's natural swing from repression to unconventional freedom, it will probably undergo a large measure of discussion and criticism.

* * * *

A new epic of maternity is to be published by the Bobbs-Merrill Company. It is "The Prairie Mother", written by Arthur Stringer. The author may well claim to be the Julian Eltinge of modern literature; indeed, it is difficult to believe that he has not, himself, borne twins. I find my illusions regarding the buoyant, carefree life on the western plains—of Canada—destroyed by this diary of lost fortunes, lost children, lost crops, and lost husbands. The heroine mother commands deep respect for the dauntless courage and endurance which allowed her to write so copious a diary. There are some who—like myself—shy at any diary, some who may object strenuously upon finding the principal characters named: Dinky-Dunk (father); Pee Wee and Popsy (the twins); Dinkie (the other child), etc., etc. On the other hand, there are assuredly quite a few who will say when they reach the last page, "Oh, so grand and sad—with such a happy ending."

* * * *

That part of the late war fought in Mesopotamia has never been credited with its true importance, for like our own Revolution, it was secondary to the great events occurring in France. Much time will probably elapse before the record of the Indian Army receives the credit due its heroic action against the Turks. General Townshend, "the hero of Kut", has written a detailed and graphic story of that hundred-to-one-shot, disastrous expedition. One of the cleverest strategists of that British Army, General Townshend made a brilliant advance toward Bagdad against overwhelming numbers. At last he was besieged by a great Turkish army at Kut-el-Amara, where he and his small force kept up a courageous resistance for nearly twenty weeks. Then the inevitable surrender came. General Townshend has been severely criticized for not demanding more strongly a larger force; in "My Campaign in Mesopotamia" (to be published by the James A. McCann Company), he admits that he never, from the beginning, had much hope of success. History will no doubt show more clearly the consequences of this unfortunate but bravely-fought campaign.

—S. M. R.

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FICTION IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The following lists of books in demand in April in the public libraries of the United States have been compiled from reports made by two hundred representative libraries, in every section of the country and in cities of all sizes down to ten thousand population. The order of choice is as stated by the librarians.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1. The Man of the Forest	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
2. The Great Impersonation	*E. Phillips Oppenheim*	LITTLE, BROWN
3. The Lamp in the Desert	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM
4. Red and Black	*Grace S. Richmond*	DOUBLEDAY
5. The House of Baltazar	*William J. Locke*	LANE
6. The Man with Three Names	*Harold MacGrath*	DOUBLEDAY

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1. The Man of the Forest	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
2. The River's End	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN
3. The House of Baltazar	*William J. Locke*	LANE
4. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
5. The Lamp in the Desert	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM
6. The Great Impersonation	*E. Phillips Oppenheim*	LITTLE, BROWN

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1. The Man of the Forest	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
2. The Re-creation of Brian Kent	*Harold Bell Wright*	BOOK SUPPLY
3. Red and Black	*Grace S. Richmond*	DOUBLEDAY
4. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse	*Vicente Blasco Ibáñez*	DUTTON
5. The Lamp in the Desert	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM
6. The River's End	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN

SOUTH CENTRAL STATES

1. The Man of the Forest	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
2. The River's End	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN
3. The Re-creation of Brian Kent	*Harold Bell Wright*	BOOK SUPPLY
4. The Moon and Sixpence	*W. Somerset Maugham*	DORAN
5. The Lamp in the Desert	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM
6. Red and Black	*Grace S. Richmond*	DOUBLEDAY

WESTERN STATES

1. The Man of the Forest	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
2. The Re-creation of Brian Kent	*Harold Bell Wright*	BOOK SUPPLY
3. Jeremy	*Hugh Walpole*	DORAN
4. Mrs. Marden	*Robert Hichens*	DORAN
5. The River's End	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN
6. The Moon and Sixpence	*W. Somerset Maugham*	DORAN

FOR THE WHOLE UNITED STATES

1. The Man of the Forest	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
2. The Re-creation of Brian Kent	*Harold Bell Wright*	BOOK SUPPLY
3. The Lamp in the Desert	*Ethel M. Dell*	PUTNAM
4. The Great Impersonation	*E. Phillips Oppenheim*	LITTLE, BROWN
5. The River's End	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN
6. Red and Black	*Grace S. Richmond*	DOUBLEDAY

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GENERAL BOOKS IN DEMAND AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The titles have been scored by the simple process of giving each a credit of six for each time it appears as first choice, and so down to a score of one for each time it appears in sixth place. The total score for each section and for the whole country determines the order of choice in the table herewith.

NEW YORK AND NEW ENGLAND STATES

1. The Economic Consequences of the Peace	*John Maynard Keynes*	HARCOURT
2. Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children	*Joseph Bucklin Bishop*	SCRIBNER
3. Abraham Lincoln	*John Drinkwater*	HOUGHTON
4. The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON
5. "Marse Henry"	*Henry Watterson*	DORAN
6. Raymond	*Sir Oliver Lodge*	DORAN

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATES

1. Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children	*Joseph Bucklin Bishop*	SCRIBNER
2. The Economic Consequences of the Peace	*John Maynard Keynes*	HARCOURT
3. Raymond	*Sir Oliver Lodge*	DORAN
4. The Education of Henry Adams	*Henry Adams*	HOUGHTON
5. A Labrador Doctor	*Wilfred T. Grenfell*	HOUGHTON
6. White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY

NORTH CENTRAL STATES

1. The Economic Consequences of the Peace	*John Maynard Keynes*	HARCOURT
2. Abraham Lincoln	*John Drinkwater*	HOUGHTON
3. White Shadows in the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
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3. Raymond	*Sir Oliver Lodge*	DORAN
4. Abraham Lincoln	*John Drinkwater*	HOUGHTON
5. "Marse Henry"	*Henry Watterson*	DORAN
6. The Seven Purposes	*Margaret Cameron*	HARPER

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THE GOSSIP SHOP

AN excellent idea, indeed! Rapidly developing—since it was lately first put into effect—into an institution, and into a force of great benefit to the cause of the dissemination of books, and to the wider and at the same time more intimate enjoyment of them.

Marcella Burns (now Mrs. George M. Hahner) it was who, at any rate in this country, began the thing—with her Book Fair at the Marshall Field and Company store in Chicago, something less than a year ago. (An interesting account of this most successful Fair was written for THE BOOKMAN by Fanny Butcher, of the Chicago "Tribune", and appeared in the issue of the magazine for November-December, 1919.)

A somewhat similar enterprise, though one of a happy character peculiar to itself, was the Hoosier Book Exhibit, recently given at the department store of L. S. Ayres and Company in Indianapolis, and conceived and managed by Eleanor Foster, head of the book department there. The distinctive nature of this collection and display of the works (and portraits) of Indiana novelists, poets, and humorists was in the capitalizing of local sentiment. It is probable that Miss Foster will herself, for the benefit of other communities, write for THE BOOKMAN the story of her "show". Its educational value, for one thing, was (we have been told by many Indianians) a godsend to them, and henceforth permits them to mingle with much more peace of mind than before in cultivated society away from home, as they are not now subject to the embarrassment of being more or less "stumped" when asked in other states to tell all about the famous author crop of Indiana.

Still another Book Fair was given not long ago in Minneapolis.

The latest venture of this kind is the only one which the Gossip Shop has had the luck to see, so to say, "face to face". And too much, we feel, we cannot say for the admirable way in which that one was "put on", and also "put over".

The large and handsome store of Scruggs-Vandervoort-Barney, in the heart of St. Louis, had until recently, we understand, only a small book department, on the first floor of their building. This spring, however, the management of "Vandervoort's", as it is popularly called in its own city, quite changed this matter. The house now has an extensive, charmingly decorated, and well stocked bookstore located on the sixth floor, a floor which it shares, most appropriately, with a little (and not so little, either) world of pianos, and on which is a delightful little theatre, referred to there as the auditorium or music hall.

This bookstore was very pleasantly christened, as you might say, by the giving of an "Author's Week", April 12 to 17, in which a number of writers

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of popularity and distinction delivered informal talks on books in the music room. Throughout the week, also, an exhibition of original manuscripts and illustrations was presented in the bookstore.

William Marion Reedy, a far-famed literary monument of St. Louis, and Editor of "Reedy's Mirror", presided (in a manner which in itself was worth going for to admire and enjoy) as Master of Ceremonies to each of the authors.

Among the speakers announced in the program, in the order there given, were: Robert Cortes Holliday, Editor of THE BOOKMAN; Mrs. Jane A. Pierson, an active writer for magazines and newspapers; Ellis Parker Butler; Max Ehrmann, an Indiana author of a number of books; Douglas Malloch, well-known writer on outdoor life; Dr. Arthur E. Bostwick, Editor of the Scientific Department of "The Literary Digest" and Librarian of the St. Louis Public Library; Mrs. Theron Colton, of Chicago, public worker and lecturer on nature; Percival Chubb—twice President of the Drama League of America—who has written largely in the field of ethics and religion; Miss Temple Bailey, a St. Louisian by adoption, and author of "The Tin Soldier"; Mrs. Mary Dillon, Louis Dodge, Fannie Hurst, and (the "Week" closed with a Children's Day) John Martin, known far and wide as the "John Martin Book" man.

Murray Hill, who was observed in the audience on several days, may later on in some of his BOOKMAN papers have something more intimate to say concerning this opening of a bookstore on which we congratulate "Vandervoort's", and St. Louis.

E. V. Lucas has just been traveling across the continent from San Francisco to New York, trying to buy copies of the books of Mrs. Wharton. He has been annoyed at finding them out of stock. In a number of instances he has found this the case, and for this reason: the shortage of paper does not permit generous reprinting of earlier books not now greatly in demand. "She", says Mr. Lucas, "is about the best there is, in England or America." A full description of Mr. Lucas's picturesque luggage will appear in an early article by Murray Hill, who assisted the Gossip Shop in putting Mr. Lucas on his train at Chicago for the East.

We (the Gossip Shop) have been under a misapprehension—if that's the word. At any rate, the fact of the matter is this: we had somehow got the hunch that the bookshop not long ago opened by Doubleday, Page and Company in St. Louis was a hand-box affair, trim but tiny, like their little shop in the Pennsylvania Railroad Station, New York. Were in there the other day. All wrong. Big place. Large stock. Entrance at either end. 'Pologize. Say we're sorry. Our mistake entirely. All kinds of books. Quick service. Capable people. Quite right, Sir; quite right.

A new book by Carl Sandburg to be published this fall, and on which he is now working, is to be called (he told the Gossip Shop in Chicago the other day) "Smoke and Steel".

The Gossip Shop learned from Booth Tarkington in Indianapolis a short time ago that the novel he is now writing is to be called "Alice Adams", the name of the heroine, who is "Alys" Adams (as she spelled herself then) when the story opens.

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We were strolling along Washington Street one afternoon a couple of weeks (or something like that) ago, and we went into a place where many books, among divers and sundry other things, are sold. There we were informed that the book most constantly in demand at that place was Drummond's "The Greatest Thing in the World". Washington Street? Why, in Indianapolis, of course.

Here is a letter just received (the story referred to is quoted from William Webster Ellsworth's "A Golden Age of Authors"):

Dear Gossip Shop:

I have just been looking over the April BOOKMAN which, by the way, seems to interest me more than any other periodical;—and that Polar Bear yarn won't do. David Warfield used it or told it in a show at the Casino many years ago. It you don't believe it, ask him. It is simply dreadful to have to call you youngsters down.

Most cordially and sincerely yours,

S. H. WAKEMAN,
Oldtimer

Ellis Parker Butler has celebrated his fiftieth birthday by writing "How it Feels to be Fifty", just published, in which he says:

At fifty a man should feel younger and stronger and more fit than he ever felt before. I do. Most men do, I believe. Younger fellows do not even play properly. They make a sort of work of it. It is not until a man is fifty that he knows that golf and fishing and poker and pinochle are play, and that work is play, and that life itself is kind of an interesting big game, too.

At twenty my life was a feverish adventure, at thirty it was a problem, at forty it was a labor, at fifty it is a joyful journey well begun.

The Shakespearian anniversary month is notable for distinguished birthdays. Harriet Prescott Spofford celebrated her eighty-fifth birthday on the third of April, two weeks after the publication of her book of short stories "The Elder's People". On the same day in California John Burroughs was celebrating his eighty-third. His next book is expected within the year. Edwin Markham's sixty-eighth anniversary is marked by the publication of a new book of verse, "Gates of Paradise".

"La Rôtisserie de la Reine Pédauque" of Anatole France (who, by the way, had *his* seventy-sixth birthday in April) has been adapted for the comic opera stage. Apropos of which the "Mercure de France" remarks:

It has long been evident that laws should be passed for the protection of masterpieces against librettists. But one would never have expected that it would be necessary to protect such works against their own authors; nor would one have expected to find among these delinquents a very great writer, and one of the finest minds that our country has produced.

Professor George Baker of the Harvard "47-Work Shop" is on leave of absence in Holland and England, obtaining material for a pageant which is to visualize the story of the Pilgrims for the tercentenary exercises at Plymouth.

"In the Days of the Pilgrim Fathers" by Mary Caroline Crawford, just issued by a Boston house, is among the timely volumes of interest because of this approaching celebration.

Scotsmen in this country will be particularly interested in the project of the newly-formed Robert Louis Stevenson Club in Edinburgh—that city which lacked the enthusiasm several years ago to erect a memorial to one of its most brilliant sons. The club is said to have started with 350 members and to be rapidly growing. Its aim is, of course, to buy the house in which Stevenson was born, and to use it for a museum of Stevensoniana. Several contributions of value have been added — notably some unpublished manuscripts donated by Sir Sidney Colvin.

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In anticipation of the celebration, next year, of the centenary of Keats's death, a movement has been started in England to save from destruction "Lawn Bank", the poet's house near Hampstead Heath.

This house, in which Keats lived during the most fruitful period of his literary career, is about to be thrown on the market as an "eligible building site". A representative committee, which includes Sir James Barrie, Dr. Robert Bridges,—the Poet Laureate,—Thomas Hardy, Viscount Bryce, and H. G. Wells, has been formed with the object of preserving it for the benefit of the public, including Americans who visit the "literary shrines" of England.

A short-time option has been obtained to afford an opportunity of procuring the necessary funds. It is estimated that not less than $50,000 will be needed for the purchase and maintenance of "Lawn Bank" as a Keats Memorial House. "Lawn Bank" is the house which Keats and his circle knew as Wentworth Place. In December, 1818, after the death of his brother Tom, Keats went to live there with Charles Brown, and this was his home until he left England for good two years later. It was soon after he went to "Lawn Bank" that he became engaged to Fanny Brawne. Her mother rented the cottage while Keats and Brown were away on their Scottish tour.

Within its walls or under the shelter of the trees which still flourish in its old-world garden, Keats planned and wrote. The old mulberry tree, under which he is said to have written his "Ode to a Nightingale", is still growing.

"The place of his death in Rome", state the committee in their appeal, "is piously preserved, but England has no corresponding memorial. If 'Lawn Bank' is destroyed no similar memorial for him can be found in the land of his birth. Such an irreparable loss would be deeply and permanently deplored."

Whitman's publishers are telling the story that they recently received, from a Boston schoolma'am, a letter addressed to

Mr. Walt Whitman,
c|o Doubleday, Page & Co.,
Garden City, Long Island, N. Y.
PLEASE FORWARD

The letter read:

Will you favor me by sending your autograph? I wish my sons and pupils to be interested in men *who do things* and so have secured the signatures of many famous men and women—Pershing, Carnegie, Bell, Bernhardt, Balfour, Taft, etc. etc.

Thanking you in advance for the marked courtesy, I am,

Very gratefully,

Obviously this was not a new brand of humor at the Hub, but an earnest inquiry which the publishers in like spirit referred to the dealers in rare books, MSS., and autographs.

Here is the Deep Sea Shelf—the ten most popular books of the sea—as selected by a wide ballot of landlubbers and seafarers alike throughout the country, who were invited to record their choice at the recent exhibit in New York of the National Marine League:

1. *Treasure Island* .....Stevenson
2. *Two Years Before the Mast*..Dana
3. *The Sea Wolf* .....London
4. *Captains Courageous* .....Kipling
5. *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* .....Verne
6. *The Cruise of the Cachalot*..Bullen
7. *Under Sail* .....Riesenberg
8. *Mr. Midshipman Easy* .....Marryat
9. *Lord Jim* .....Conrad
10. *The Nigger of the Narcissus* Conrad

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Besides the Perfect Ten, the following titles received the greatest number of votes:

11. *Typhoon* ..... Conrad
12. *Robinson Crusoe* ..... Defoe
13. *The Wreck of the Grosvenor* Russell
14. *Westward Ho!* ..... Kingsley
15. *Toilers of the Sea* ..... Hugo
16. *Sailing Alone Around the World* ..... Slocum
17. *The Pilot* ..... Cooper
18. *Dauber* ..... Masefield
19. *Kidnapped* ..... Stevenson
20. *The Seven Seas* ..... Kipling
21. *Salt Water Ballads* ..... Masefield
22. *The Cruise of the Snark* .... London
23. *Many Cargoes* ..... Jacobs
24. *Moby Dick* ..... Melville
25. *Youth* ..... Conrad
26. *Tom Cringle's Log* ..... Scott
27. *The Clipper Ship Era* ..... Clark
28. *Masterman Ready* ..... Marryat
29. *The Greenhand* ..... Cupples
30. *The Ancient Mariner* ..... Coleridge
31. *The Mutiny of the Elsinore* . London
32. *Victory* ..... Conrad
33. *At Sunwich Port* ..... Jacobs
34. *Typee* ..... Melville
35. *Chance* ..... Conrad
36. *The Swiss Family Robinson* .. Wyss
37. *Caleb West, Master Diver* .. Smith
38. *The Phantom Ship* ..... Marryat
39. *Out of Gloucester* ..... Connolly
40. *Mare Nostrum* ..... Blasco Ibáñez
41. *Casuals of the Sea* ..... McFee
42. *Two Admirals* ..... Cooper
43. *Peter Simple* ..... Marryat
44. *The Mysterious Island* ..... Verne
45. *The Brassbounder* ..... Bone
46. *The Grain Ship* ..... Robertson
47. *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History* ..... Mahan
48. *Cappy Ricks* ..... Kyne
49. *Sinful Peck* ..... Robertson
50. *Sailor's Log* ..... Evans

William McFee proposed as "The Seafarer's Library":

Tom Cringle's Log ..... Scott
Two Years Before the Mast .... Dana
Mr. Midshipman Easy ..... Marryat
Captains Courageous ..... Kipling
The Flying Cloud ..... Roberts
The Cruise of the Cachalot ..... Bullen
The Log of a Sea-Waif ..... Bullen
The Salving of a Derelict ..... Drake
The Grain Carriers ..... Noble
Marooned ..... Russell
Typhoon ..... Conrad
Toilers of the Sea ..... Hugo
An Iceland Fisherman ..... Loti
The Sea Surgeon ..... D'Annunzio
The Sea Hawk ..... Sabatini

"Please note I do not include Conrad. He bores me," said a man who listed his opinion of sea books in the "Evening Post". And the "Line o' Type" of the Chicago "Tribune" defended his choice of "The Nigger of the Narcissus" as his favorite salt-sea yarn: "Conrad is an over-praised institution—that is true of everything that is good. He can write very well and very badly. But he knows the sea and he communicates its mystery and romance better than anybody since Homer." "Tars:" wrote one "Cyclone" to the Deep Sea Shelf, "My vote is for Holman Day's 'Blow the Man Down' and John Masefield's 'Dauber'." "A literary expert has told me that Melville had written the best sea story known to the world," said one of the "Times" staff as he voted for Melville and Dana. "These books were written by Americans—both sailors—concerning the American sailor and the American Merchant Marine. They are histories as well as novels. Melville's writings synchronized the flourishing period of the great whaling industry of New England and the supremacy of American shipping in general. Dana's story of the Cape Horn route has an interest today because of the linking of the Atlantic and Pacific by the Panama canal." So raged the opinions in what the Deep Sea Shelf called "this conspiracy against the mothers of the United States to revive youthful interest in the romance-laden books of the sea".

Enthusiastic support of the foremost men and women in Paris—American, British, French—is securing for the French capital a model American public library. It will make the best literature of America and important facts about America available to the residents of Paris, and will be

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the international outpost of the American Library Association—an outgrowth of the Paris Headquarters during the war. It will be in a position to give advisory assistance and to furnish a demonstration. Information about libraries and other educational affairs in Europe will be collected and transmitted to America for our good. Several hundred thousand francs have been subscribed and a campaign is now on in Paris for an endowment. The American Library Association, New York City, is receiving contributions in America for this activity.

"Punch" again:

"It is feared that owing to the sudden appearance of summer weather last week, the Poet Laureate will once again be obliged to hold over his spring poem."

And there is also this comment on American over-indulgence of Englishmen:

> Sir Oliver's personality is like that of one of the prophets of old. Venerable, white of hair and what scanty locks of hair remain, a dome-like head, over six feet in height.
>
> *Boston Herald*

"This must be the result of American atmosphere, as we are quite certain that the last time we saw Sir Oliver, his head was not an inch over three feet in height."

"Le petit Journal" is a new semi-monthly publication of a New York house—a four-page illustrated folder consisting of selections from current French papers and magazines, a literary page, a sporting column, a column of society notes, and one devoted to feminine interests.

"Those Americans who keep track of the women authors of France", writes George S. Hellman (recently returned from a year in France) in a letter to THE BOOKMAN, "are familiar with Jean de Gourmont's volume, entitled 'Muses d'aujourd'hui', a book prefaced by a brilliantly suggestive essay on physiological poetry, and containing some eleven papers radiant with excerpts from the Comtesse de Noailles, Rénée Vivien, Hélène Picard, and other French poets. Published in 1910, this volume was too early to include among its chapters a critique on the work of Natalie Barney, who later in that same year appeared before the public with her first two volumes: 'Actes et Entr'actes', devoted largely to dramatic verse, and 'Eparpillements', a fascinating little volume of epigrams. If a second 'Muses d'aujourd'hui' were now to be written, Miss Barney would probably be given a chapter therein, despite her American birth,—so fully has this woman, to whom Rémy de Gourmont wrote his 'Lettres à une Amazone', been accepted as a stimulating factor in the literary life of the Paris of today.

"For some twenty years, this American has maintained one of the few real salons where French statesmen, authors, artists, scientists, actors, journalists meet to enjoy her hospitality. But she has not lost her sense of kinship with her native land. During the period of the armistice her enthusiastic cooperation in all matters relating to the art education of the American soldiers won enduring gratitude.

"Natalie Barney's interest in whatever either practically or sentimentally draws France and America closer together, is shown in her newest book, 'Poems et Poèmes, Autres Alliances', recently brought out in New York, on the curious bilingual title-page of which appear the names of both the French and the American publishers.

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The book itself is divided into two parts—the first given over to verses in English, the second to lyrics in her adopted tongue.

"In all less than fourscore poems, this work is intrinsically the product of an American woman who has experienced, during many years, the intellectual and emotional life of the French capital. There is in America no milieu where a woman of Miss Barney's temperament and attainments could realize herself with full freedom. Ultra-modern as are these poems, they are essentially pagan in their passion for the beauty of love and for the love of beauty. They are closely allied to that Renaissance spirit which so avidly sought new experiences in all fields of man's emotional and intellectual reactions. Life is a choice of experiences, and for the person of strong will, individualistic, of dual nature, passionate, intellectual, and artistic, the choice is not always conditioned by the usual formulæ of society. In the poem 'Life' with which the English portion of the volumes concludes, the poet bids goodby to 'old habits, old deaths', calling them 'sacred ground under my on-faring':

I have shut my eyes long enough—
Shut eyes grow blind!
Clinging to just one little human life!"

The publishers of William Roscoe Thayer's biography of Theodore Roosevelt have made arrangements with a New York house to reprint this book in a popular-price edition.

A new French monthly, "L'Acropole", is being published in Athens. Its purpose is the consideration of reconstruction activities in Western Europe and the Near East, embracing history, archæology, art, literature, drama, poetry, politics, economics, and religion. French and English publications will also receive critical attention. Prominent members of the staff of the University of Athens and of the Académie Française have promised their cooperation in the enterprise.

"The Bad Results of Good Habits and Other Lapses" is the title of a new book by a Boston clergyman. Perhaps the accident of this author's being born and educated in Ireland accounts for the racy quality of such chapters as "Life's a Jest", "In Praise of Eve", "The Happiness of Being Grown-up", and "A Trip Around My Soul". The jacket bears the following pertinent inscription:

It has been noted that the climatic prospects as far as heaven is concerned are fine, but that judging from the good people of the present day, there is no similar promise there of good company. This book is an attempt to sell a few sites in heaven to kindred souls to whom company is of more importance than climate.

Breakfasting with Browning, walking after lunch with Carlyle, and dining at Lord Lytton's elbow are memorable experiences of his undergraduate days which W. H. Mallock, a nephew of Froude, the historian, recalls in the May "Harper's". Browning "held out both his hands to me with an almost boisterous cordiality. His eyes sparkled with laughter, his beard was carefully trimmed, and an air of fashion was exhaled from his dazzling white waistcoat." His talk was "a constant flow of anecdotes and social allusions". While he was hardly the boy's ideal of "the singer of 'Lyric Love' as 'a wonder and a wild desire' ", still he left the poet's presence with a face "shining like Moses when he came down from the mount". Carlyle's déshabille impressed the boy so unfavorably that he said to himself:

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"If you represent fame, let me represent obscurity." And when the philosopher blew his nose in a pair of old woolen gloves, the disenchantment was complete. "I here saw at once an illustration of a chapter in 'Sartor Resartus', in which the author denounced what he christened 'The Sect of the Dandies', as described and glorified by Bulwer Lytton in 'Pelham'." Lytton represented to young Mallock everything Carlyle hated:

I was indeed, despite my reverence for him, faintly conscious myself that his turquoise shirt-stud, set with diamonds, was too large, and that his coat would have been in better taste had the cuffs not been of velvet. But it seemed to me that from his eyes, keen, authoritative, and melancholy, all the passions, all the intellect, and all the experiences of the world were peering. To have sat by him was an adventure; to have been noticed by him was not far from a sacrament.

In Walt Whitman's Journal, July, 1881, in the prose "Specimen Days", are found quotations from several of Whitman's favorite poems which he was in the habit of carrying around in his pocket and rereading. Among these is the only quotation he ever made from an American poet—part of a sonnet on Maurice de Guérin written by Maurice Francis Egan in his early twenties and brought out in "The Century" (then "Scribner's"):

A pagan heart, a Christian soul had he,
He followed Christ, yet for dead Pan he sighed,
Till earth and heaven met within his breast:
As if Theocritus in Sicily
Had come upon the figure crucified
And lost his gods in deep, Christ-given rest.

Budding playwrights who struggle with the refractory characters of their imaginations should take heart from the precepts of François de Curel. This member of the Académie Française, whose new play "L'Ame en Folie" was recently produced at the Théâtre des Arts, has imparted to readers of "Les Annales" his method of composing. Among other confidences is this:

When I write, the entrance of a person who speaks to me does not disturb me. I am, on the contrary, delighted at having my attention diverted; I seek to retain the intruder, no matter how insignificant he may be. Upon his departure I find that my characters have progressed; my faculties of production are doubled. If I am alone for a long time I saunter to the window and amuse myself by gazing at the *peasants working in the distance, at the hares* pursuing one another, at the clouds, the herds, etc.,—this without giving a thought in the world to my plays. At the end of several minutes my characters arise within me, force themselves upon my notice, and lead me back invincibly to my manuscript.

In conclusion, the playwright observes:

I have almost no sensation of being the author of my plays.... After a short while, I completely forget my works. If, at the end of ten years, I reread them, I have very real surprises; I am truly astonished at hearing these personages express themselves as they do under such and such circumstances. I feel myself absolutely free to censure or to admire. I am hindered neither by amour-propre nor by modesty. I am not the author.

A new mystery play "The Bat", the joint work of Mary Roberts Rinehart and Avery Hopwood, is soon to be produced by Wagenhals and Kemper—first in Washington and later in New York. A successful farce of several years ago will be recalled—"Seven Days", by the same authors and under the same management. Mrs. Rinehart's stories "Tish" and "Bab: A Sub-Deb" have recently been filmed.

A series of biographies of modern statesmen is shortly to be brought out by an American firm. Those who have played leading rôles on the diplomatic stage during and after the war will be included: Venizelos, by Herbert Adams Gibbons; Clemenceau, by Norton Fullerton; Woodrow Wilson, by William Allen White; and volumes on Lloyd George, Viscount Grey, and Baron Sonnino.

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William Dean Howells, novelist, poet, and editor, died on May 11, in New York, having passed his eighty-third birthday on the first of March. His father—of Welsh ancestry—was an Ohio printer and editor, and the boy's education and training were acquired chiefly in his newspaper office; at twelve crying his father's paper "The Transcript" on the streets; at fourteen a reporter on "The State Journal"; at nineteen correspondent for "The Cincinnati Gazette"; at twenty-two an editor of "The Ohio State Journal"; and then assistant editor (to his father) of "The Sentinel". His first poetry, in his early teens, he put into type at the printer's case without the interposition of paper; some of these verses were printed by "The Atlantic Monthly". Moving to Boston, he enjoyed the patronage and friendship of Longfellow. A campaign life of Abraham Lincoln commended him to the President's notice and he was appointed consul to Venice, where he wrote "Venetian Life" and "Italian Journeys". Here he married Elinor G. Mead, a sister of the sculptor. On his return he was one of the contributing staff of "The New York Tribune", and a little later became editor of "The Atlantic Monthly"—a position which he resigned after some years to Thomas Bailey Aldrich, leaving as his legacy to the magazine "The Contributors' Club" which he had created. After a few years of conducting "The Editor's Study" in "Harper's Magazine", he for a short time edited "The Cosmopolitan". Among the honorary degrees conferred upon William Dean Howells were: M.A. from Harvard, M.A. and Litt.D. from Yale, Litt.D. from Oxford and Columbia, and LL.D. from Adelbert. He was also President of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. The catalogue of his published works in the fifty-five years from 1860 to 1915 includes seventy-two titles. His last work, scarcely completed, was a series of papers "Years of My Middle Life" for "Harper's Magazine"—a complement to the earlier "Years of My Youth".

An Edith Cavell edition of Thomas à Kempis's "Imitation of Christ" comes from an English press, and is being sold for the benefit of the Edith Cavell Homes of Rest for Nurses. The volume from which the facsimile has been made was in the possession of Miss Cavell at the time of her death. Its fly-leaf has a brief summary of her arrest, imprisonment, and sentence, ending with the words written in anticipation of the event: "Died at 7 A. M. on Dec. 12, 1915."

Frederick O'Brien's "White Shadows in the South Seas", which has been one of the best-selling non-fiction books of the last several months, has been dramatized by the author in collaboration with Laurence Langner of the Theatre Guild, and will appear next autumn at the Garrick Theatre under the title "White Shadows". Mr. O'Brien is also helping to put his story on the screen.

Another swing of the pendulum. Shelley's prose "A Philosophical View of Reform", written a century ago but never appearing in book form, is about to be issued for the first time in England and America, being considered topical in its discussion of social problems. Written in a vellum notebook, it was decorated—probably in the author's intervals of seeking inspiration—with drawings, of which we get the facsimile.

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